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the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 12.5 million, and the number of people aged 75 and over has increased from 4.5 million to 6.5 million (Office for National Statistics 2000). The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase to 15.5 million by 2020, and the number of people aged 75 and over to 8.5 million (Office for National Statistics 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people in the UK. The Department of Health (2000) has published a strategy for older people, which sets out the government's commitment to improve the lives of older people. The strategy is based on the following principles: (1) older people should be able to live independently and actively; (2) older people should be able to access the services and support they need; (3) older people should be able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and (4) older people should be able to live in a safe and secure environment. The strategy also sets out a number of specific objectives, including: (1) to reduce the number of older people who are in care homes; (2) to improve the quality of care in care homes; (3) to increase the number of older people who are employed; and (4) to improve the health and well-being of older people.

The strategy is a key document in the development of policy for older people in the UK. It provides a framework for the development of services and support for older people, and it sets out the government's commitment to improve the lives of older people. The strategy is based on the following principles: (1) older people should be able to live independently and actively; (2) older people should be able to access the services and support they need; (3) older people should be able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and (4) older people should be able to live in a safe and secure environment. The strategy also sets out a number of specific objectives, including: (1) to reduce the number of older people who are in care homes; (2) to improve the quality of care in care homes; (3) to increase the number of older people who are employed; and (4) to improve the health and well-being of older people.

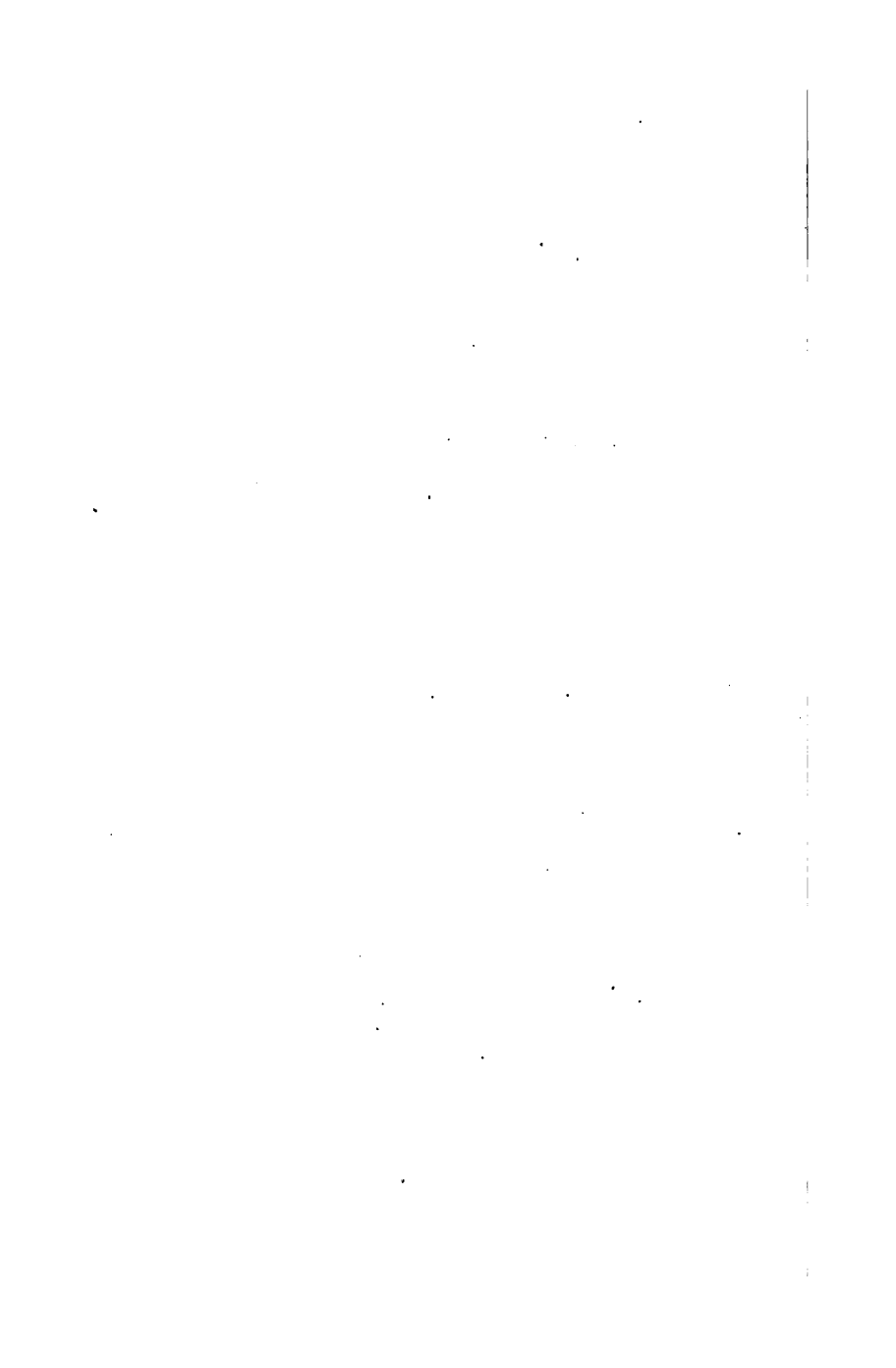
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HISTORIC
AND
MENTAL IMAGERY.

BY
JOSEPH W. REYNOLDS, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF ST. STEPHEN'S, SPITALFIELDS.

LONDON:
WERTHEIM, MACINTOSH, AND HUNT,
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW;
AND 23, HOLLES-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE.
1860.

146. m. 15.



TO THE
REVEREND JOHN PATTESON, M.A.,
RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, SPITALFIELDS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I humbly aim, in this little Book, to make reading and knowledge more generally pleasant and useful, by encouraging the habit of forming mental pictures and images of historic facts: that while instruction is conveyed to the mind, lively feelings may be excited in the heart; to the increase of mental power, and the correcting, beautifying, and enlarging of the imagination.

I have not so worked up every event as to make it stand out, varnished and framed, in the full beauty of a finished picture; or moulded every thought into the just proportions of a goodly image, or pleasing figure: on the contrary, my aim has been, not to leave the reader little or nothing to do; but rather, by suggestion, to lead on his own faculties of memory, judgment, and imagination, to

the grouping of mental scenes for himself; and to place in his own hands a spiritual mallet and chisel wherewith to mould statues at his will.

It is hoped that the parts consisting of simple historic narrative; that the putting forth, here and there, of thoughts unadorned with any figure; will not be deemed useless; but, if nothing more, as ground for the erection of a statue, or as a wall for the hanging of a picture.

In Christian love and esteem I dedicate my little work to you. I have ever found you a kind friend, a judicious counsellor, a true brother in the ministry; and long honoured you for laborious, self-denying, and continued efforts, to bring the Gospel to every soul in your large parish. I rejoice that those efforts, in regard to the Jews, led to our becoming acquainted with each other.

I recollect seeing in your Church hundreds of Jews, who had assembled in order to hear about their Messiah, when, on the first occasion, at your request, I had the privilege of addressing them; and well remember with what delight we spoke of their marked attention, and of the evident effect produced on their minds by the preaching of the Gospel.

I trust that your example of inviting them to hear suitable sermons, and of labouring among them in the spirit of one who feels himself to be

responsible for the souls of his people, will be followed by all the clergy who have Jews in their parishes; and that this people, to whom we owe all our hopes of salvation, (John iv. 22,) will no longer be left to perish at our own doors for lack of knowledge.

It is a very painful fact that so little is being done for them; that most people content themselves with paying subscriptions to a society, and then amuse themselves with an account of an expedition sent to find out a few Jews abroad, while thousands of them are perishing from utter neglect at home.

This fact is not only painful, but unaccountable. It is a libel upon the English Jews to say that they are too bigoted to be reasoned with; and a libel upon our holy faith to assert "in our days the Gospel is not the power of God unto salvation to them." Your own efforts shew that labour will be rewarded, and the last time that you invited them to hear the Word of God, and it was again my privilege to preach to them, they came in larger numbers than on any previous occasion; proving that though the love of novelty might have drawn them at first, a spirit of inquiry led them at last. I trust that you, and many of our brethren in the ministry, yes, all the people of our land, may be led to see, by the conversion of many thousands of this ancient people, that the Gospel has not lost its

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power, nor the Word of God its life; and that we may all of us, both children of Abraham in the spirit, and children of Abraham after the flesh, rejoice together in the glorious fact that a people is born in our midst.

I shall ever deem it a privilege to labour with you; both for the building up of our own people in the faith, and for the evangelization of Israel.

Hoping that God will support you in all your labours, and give you an abundant blessing; crown you with happiness in this life, and glory in the life to come;

I remain,

My Dear Friend,

With much affection and respect,

Your humble fellow-servant in Christ Jesus,

JOSEPH W. REYNOLDS.

ST. STEPHEN'S, SPITALFIELDS,

April, 1860.

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HISTORIC AND MENTAL IMAGERY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHAMBERS OF IMAGERY.

Traveller and Artist—Mental Pictures—Pleasure and Profit—Other advantages—Directions—A Voyage of Columbus—Moral and Reflection—Bag of Pearls.

THE traveller, in a distant and strange land, is delighted with new scenes and sounds. Upon his return, many listen to the narration of romantic adventure; and would gladly cross continent and ocean, to behold foreign wonders. The artist, by the power of drawing and composition, joined with the beautiful relief afforded by light and shade, depicts scenes from nature and history; or renders permanent and vivid the fleeting conceptions of his own mind. These pictures excite wonder and delight; palaces are adorned with them, and

nations make collections of them. The paintings, however, of the artist, can be possessed only by the wealthy ; and the scenery of far-off climes be viewed only by the traveller.

God has given to the man who cannot travel into strange countries, ~~who~~ cannot cover the walls of his house with creations of the painter's genius, a faculty by which foreign lands may be brought home ; distant scenes, near ; and beautiful pictures painted at his will. This faculty dwells in the mind, and when carefully trained, can be put quickly into practice. It is the power of drawing and painting mental pictures : the forming clear ideas of facts and scenes, whether past or present, at home or abroad : the ideal placing of fine full forms, with brilliancy of colour, beauty of composition, and pure feeling, within a mental chamber ; and then, with the light of imagination, going through the door of thought, to look at the gorgeous scenes which fancy has created.

The power of forming mental pictures must not be confounded with what has been called day-dreaming, and castle-building in the air. It does not ally itself to the silly conceits of

the weak and idle ; but lays hold of what is real and true ; and adorns the tablets of the memory, and the walls of every mental recess, with beautiful representations of past and external events. It is the seeing and realizing by the mind, that which is read with the eye, or heard with the ear.

The use of this power affords great pleasure ; for the mind becomes as a richly furnished house, hung with tapestry, and pictures of pleasant scenes. In reading and writing, hearing and speaking, the imagination paints thoughts and things in all the brilliancy of light and fulness of shadow. Men and women of distant ages, historic facts, and Scripture scenes, rise up with electric quickness ; and, in the freshness of new, and the nearness of present objects, make every mental act beautiful and pleasant.

The profit is also great ; for the memory is helped, and the affections are excited ; the dead made to live, and the living to be present. The mind's eye sees the glorious Redeemer, who had stepped down from His heavenly throne into our lower world, at the well of Samaria ; the ear listens to His divine conversation with

Nicodemus ; and our hand, with His hand gives bread to the hungering multitude. Living scenes of all that can improve and ennoble the soul, are thus brought home, in a few moments, to man's house within the brain.

These scenes are correct and comprehensive according to the measure of intelligence and knowledge which the man possesses. They enable him, while in his own chamber, to cross the seas with Columbus or Cook ; to go with Ross or Franklin to the North ; and with Richardson or Livingstone to Africa. They raise up to life and motion the huge animals which dwelt upon the earth before man became its tenant. By their means a stranger can stand upon the banks of the Nile, within the palaces of Babylon, or beside the temples of Nineveh. These mental journeys are without cost or danger, draw out the faculties of the mind without fatigue to the body, improve the taste, exercise the imagination, and strengthen the judgment. They bring into use, all that has been read in history, all that is known by science, and enable us to behold the various manners and customs of the world.

Pleasurable and profitable is it thus to draw pictures, and beautify the mind. Richer by far is the man who can do so, than he who can only cover his walls with the efforts of another's genius. His mind will be happier, and his feelings purer; his judgment more powerful, and his love of truth more intense. The hand may not grasp so much gold as the miser clutches, the body may not rest upon down, or be clothed with silk; but within the mind is the palace of a great king, and the owner, like a magician, can call to his aid all the powers of nature, and bring from afar every product of the earth.

Historic and spiritual scenes are the best that can be used in forming mental pictures. While you read about facts, and past events are made present by the power of words; write upon the tablets of your memory the moral conveyed, and paint within the chambers of your mind pictures of the things mentioned: then the moral will have more force, and the facts be better understood. When sound judgment has made choice of a suitable subject, look upon it with a cheerful mind. Then, with a thought, rapidly sketch the prominent features; and

follow with bold strokes in order to fix the arrangement, and embody the figures. Imagination, directed by good taste, will afterwards add the high lights, and even bring out the ruddy transparency of skin, seen in Titian's works; or the fulness and sweetness of Raphael's forms; or develop high and poetic feeling, with Rembrandt's mastery of light and shade. If the work is historically correct, and morally beautiful; shows fine devotional feeling, rich mellow colouring, and dignity of form; you are truly a mental artist.

For a first attempt, and simply as an example, take the voyage of Columbus, which began on the third day of August, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-two.

There are three small crazy vessels, two of them without decks, steering due west from the Canary Islands; the crews united, including adventurers, number only one hundred and twenty men. The first day is calm; on the second, when land is lost sight of, the sailors beat their breasts and shed tears, fearing never more to see their homes. They look with terror on the boundless wilderness of waters

lying before them, which tradition and superstitious fancy have peopled with innumerable forms of horror.—Columbus goes among them, and with commanding and winning address, restores their confidence.

He is tall and well made, with large head and aquiline nose, light blue eyes and fresh complexion, hair already bleached, a majestic presence, and an affable manner. He is a man in whom are united daring energy with patient perseverance, and the deepest feelings with the highest self-command. Full of devoted loyalty to his sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, he shews the utmost solicitude for the welfare of his followers, acting with justice and honour to all. The great object to which he has given himself expands his soul. The aspect of his character is noble, and in harmony with the grandeur of his plans; which, in some respects, are more stupendous in their results, than those which God has permitted any other mortal to achieve.* He is a fit man to command men.

Again terror spreads among the crew, because

* Prescott's "Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella."
Part ii., cap. xviii.

the magnetic needle does not point exactly to the polar star, but inclines to the west ; and again are their fears dispelled. After this the sea is so covered with weeds, that it becomes like a vast meadow, through which the vessels must plough their course. The sailors think that they have come to the world's end ; that beneath are dangerous rocks ; and before, ruin staring them in the face. Then a brisk gale carries them forward, several birds are seen hovering about the ships, the despairing crew again take heart, and sail cheerily with bright hope.

Three weeks have passed. They have gone further than had any previous navigators, and yet their prospect of success is as distant as ever. They whisper, they murmur, they cabal. Behold Columbus on the deck, telling them of the fame and wealth which are to be won by perseverance, threatening the cowardly, and seeking to rekindle the zeal of all. Once more they obey.

Their passions, at length, refuse all control ; fear extinguishes every noble sentiment ; rage, terror, and despair, are seen in every face. The officers and men assemble tumultuously on deck, and, with many threats, demand that the

vessel may tack about, and return to Europe. Commands are in vain, entreaties are disregarded ; and the weighty and persuasive words of a man whom they are accustomed to obey, no longer restrain their violent excesses. They threaten to throw him overboard, and compel him to promise, that if they will obey his command for but three days longer, and if during that time land be not discovered, he will, then, give up his enterprise. The men return sullenly to their work. Now look : there comes floating near to one of the ships, a cane which seems to have been newly cut. The sailors of another vessel take up a branch, covered with red berries, perfectly fresh. The clouds gather round the setting sun in an unusual form, the wind is changeable, the air soft and warm. These are all signs of land. Columbus is sure that it is near. The crews assemble for evening prayer, the sails are furled, the ships lie to, not an eye is closed all night, every man is on deck, and looking intently for land. Columbus sees a little light, then another sees it, and after that a third. At midnight there is a joyful cry, Land ! land !*

* Called by Columbus, San Salvador.

cannot believe that there is land, but at dawn their eyes rest on verdant fields, well wooded, and watered with many rivulets ; a delightful country. At once, with a mighty impulse, they sing a hymn of praise to God ; and then weep like children with tears of joy. Nor is this all : they gather round the man whom they had opposed and insulted, cast themselves at his feet with reverence, and passing from scorn and hatred, to admiration and love, declare that he is inspired by God ; and has received wisdom and firmness from heaven to accomplish a design, which surpassed all the thoughts of men in every former age.

How many pictures for a painter ! Columbus, the first European who set foot in the New World, richly clothed, and with a naked sword in his hand ; his men all following reverently and with joy ; then the rich but uncultivated soil, with herbs, and shrubs, and trees. Soldiers and sailors solemnly planting the cross, casting themselves upon the earth to worship God, and then taking possession of the land for their king. After this the natives coming around in the unadorned simplicity of nature, with gentle, timid, and pleasing aspect ; their long

black hair floating on their shoulders, or bound up in tresses. They look with wonder and curiosity at the fairer skins of the Spaniards, their strange weapons and ships, and with transports of joy receive beads and trinkets. The terrible sound of the guns, accompanied with fire and smoke, fills them with terror; and they regard their guests as children of the sun, who have come to visit the earth.

The moral to be derived from this mental picture is two-fold: (i.,) that man, in prayerful dependence on God, may overcome most difficulties by the right use of proper means: (ii.,) that he is never to be discouraged by the opposition of the ignorant; because success will turn it into approbation, and make that which was blamed by the ignorant, to be crowned with praise by the wise.

Our body is like a crazy vessel, and our voyage of life is over a sea that is tossed by many storms. Fears are within, and difficulties without; men, like raging waves, rise against us; and Satan, with fierce blasts, opposes our progress: yet, nevertheless, with the word of God as our chart; the Holy Spirit, as a mag-

netic needle, ever directing our course heavenward ; and the Lord Jesus Christ as Captain of our Salvation ; we shall, at length, enter a peaceful haven, and find a new world of blessedness.

Devotional feeling may also lead the mind to another spiritual reflection. Had those Spaniards been children of the Sun of Righteousness, they would have made the copper faces of those simple people to shine with the light of the Gospel. Instead of desolating the race by wearisome labour in the mines, upon the mountains, and in washing river sand for gold ; they would have led them from the soldiers to the angels, and have lifted up their souls from Columbus to Christ. They would have taught them to look on to the time when the Lord shall come with a glorious host to make this old world new, to set His tabernacle with men, and to build the holy city, the new Jerusalem.

Is any further illustration needed as to the use of this mental power ?

(A.D. 298.) Look at that soldier from one of the legions of Galerius. He is searching for spoil in the deserted camp of Narses, the Persian

King, and he finds a bag of shining leather filled with pearls. He carefully preserves the bag, but throws away the pearls. Do not act as did the ignorant soldier ; but let memory be as the shining bag, wherein the facts and scenes of life are carefully laid as precious pearls ; not to be scattered wastefully with barbarous hand, but to be brought forth for the adornment of your conversation, and the enriching of your friends with various knowledge. Let ideas be based on facts, words stand for things, and fitting illustrations be frequently used. Let not your speech be as pearls in disarray, but united, and strung into a beautiful and precious necklace, by a double silken cord of reason and good taste. Then sound judgment, accurate knowledge, and poetic fancy, like three graceful sisters, shall richly adorn you with it.

“ O for a joy from reason ! joy from that
Which makes man man, and, exercis'd aright,
Will make him more : a bounteous joy ! that gives
And promises ; that weaves, with art divine,
The richest prospect into present peace.”—*Young*.

CHAPTER II.

JERUSALEM.

Destroyed, A.D. 70 to 72—The City—Factions—Signs—
Famine—Sword and Fire—Jesus.

“BEAUTIFUL for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion.” (Ps. xlviii. 2.)

Jerusalem was built upon two mountains, separated from each other by a valley. It was girded with three walls on every side, except where impassable valleys forbade approach. Every wall had high and strong towers, formed of immense stones. The Temple, of beautiful white marble, the roof overlaid with gold, and the strong Castle of Antonia, were on the eastern hill, opposite to the Mount of Olives.

Think of a platform, raised and enclosed, stretching out eighteen hundred yards from north to south, and eleven hundred yards from east to west, with a general slope from west to east; and see the city displayed, like a panorama, to Jesus, who is

upon the Mount of Olives, weeping over the sins of the people. Zion, the citadel, rises majestically at the southern end, surrounded by the upper city. Moriah, on the east, clothed with the white marble of the temple, crowned with gold, and still mindful of Isaac's sacrifice, is the holy place of the Most High. Acra, on the north, sustaining the lower city, is the shape of the moon when she is horned. Thence the houses creep out, because the people are many, until they form a new city, strong and beautiful, which Agrippa has adorned and strengthened with a mighty wall. Between Jesus and the city is the valley of Jehoshaphat, full of tombs, the torrent Kedron is running through it. On the south side is a rocky ravine. Hence was the stone brought for the buildings, and beyond it rises a broad and barren hill. On the west is the valley of Rephaim, looked down into, from a great height, by Mount Gihon. Is it not a goodly inheritance, suitable for the excellency of Jacob, whom God loved? (Ps. xlvii. 4.)

Moses said of this city :—

“The Lord shall smite thee with madness and blindness.” (Deut. xxviii. 28.)

This prophecy was marvellously fulfilled in the blind and frantic rage with which that beautiful city was torn by the factions within it; every man's hand was against his fellow.

At first there were two parties; the Moderates, and the Zealots. The Moderates, foreseeing that the war would end in the ruin of their country, urged the people to turn away the desolation by timely submission to the Roman Emperor. The Zealots, on the contrary, refused peace at any price; and encouraged themselves in relentless hostility, by the delusion that their mad passions grew out of ardent zeal for the law and the temple.

Before Titus began the siege, the Zealots admitted an army of Idumeans into the city, by whose help they destroyed the leaders of the moderate party, Ananus and Joshua, twelve thousand persons of noble birth, and a great number of citizens. The people, enraged at this, (and John, the leader of the Zealots, threatening to burn the city,) admitted another Zealot, named Simon, with a large body of soldiers. About this time, also, John's

authority was resisted by Eleazar, who took refuge in, and fortified the temple. There were, therefore, when the siege commenced, three hostile factions preying upon the city, like voracious birds upon a carcase. Eleazar was in the temple; John in the upper, and part of the lower city; and Simon below the others, in the worst place, but with most followers.

The time having arrived when the passover should be eaten, Eleazar opened the gates of the inmost court of the temple, that the people might enter to worship. John, having secretly armed some of his party, sent them in as if to honour God. At a given signal they threw off their upper garments, and stood forth in armour. The confusion was terrible. The worshippers fled, the Priests were thrown into heaps, trampled upon, many slain, and the Holy House was defiled with blood.

There were now only two factions, but the noise of battle never ceased. Ever and anon, the wail of the mourner, and the loud cry of agony, rose above the tumult. Fires, kindled by fiendish men to destroy the granaries, made Jerusalem as the pit of hell;

and burned the corn which should have been food for the people. The Holy House was a citadel of war. God's service was made to be devil's work. The Lord's Day became Satan's festival. The vessels of the altar, and all that was sacred, were polluted by Jewish hands, dipped in Jewish blood. O, Jerusalem, great was thy sin; and great thy sorrow! The idolatrous Roman soldier stood aghast at the madness of the people. Titus, the General, abhorred their cruelty. The measure of iniquity was filled up, and they suffered the penalty of their sin. Drunkenness was added to thirst, and stubbornness to obstinacy. These plagued the land, as with brimstone and burning, cast down wall and tower, consumed palace and temple.

Picture Jerusalem as a colossal man, with a brilliant crown, upon a lofty mountain. His forehead stamped with folly, his right hand stained with blood, on his left scenes of famine. Clothe him with a robe of divers colours, let his limbs be distorted with furious passions, curses ring in his ears, blasphemies proceed out of his mouth, and fiery glances from his eyes: then give him a weary heart and an

afflicted conscience. What will become of him? He rushes, with marks of strong terror in his countenance, down the precipice of despair! That wretched man, of all men most miserable, is a symbol of Jerusalem.

His brilliant crown is the fiery light from a city in flames. That lofty mountain is the lifting up of the people above all other nations. The stained right hand is an emblem of bloody strife, and the scenes on the left picture Jerusalem's wasted children. The many coloured robe is a mark of folly; distorted limbs, of agony; blasphemy and curses, of impiety and sacrilege. The fiery glances tell of that burning hate against the Roman, which grows out of a frightful self-consciousness, that their own mad passions are goading them to ruin, while the sword of destruction, and the spear of desolation, clash in their halls, and gleam from their towers.

Picture Jerusalem, as nearly as study and travel will enable you, as it really was: let history, and antiquity, and criticism, aid you in forming a picture of its inhabitants: then let imagination carry you back to those far-off times, and show you Rome and the world, as

they lay before the eye, and in the mind, of one of those fierce children of Israel: then those times and scenes will have a meaning for you, that will throw light even on the things of to-day, and make sin to be dreadful.

The Lord Jesus foretold the error that should accompany the desolation:—

“Fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” (Luke xxi. 11.)

The historian Josephus describes the fulfilment, in nearly these words:—

A great light shines within the temple, round the altar, and the Holy Place; so that the darkness is made to be light as day. The brazen gate on the east, of massive weight, moves of itself; and, though deep bolted into the firm floor, throws open its portals. It is only by the use of mighty force that it can be closed again. War chariots, and soldiers in armour, are seen embattled in heaven. A sepulchral voice is heard, a quaking felt, and the cry of a multitude arises, “hence let us go.” One Jesus, the son of Ananus, begins, four years before the war breaks out, to cry day and night with a loud voice, “Woe! woe!”

in the streets and lanes of the city. He is whipped till his bones are laid bare, yet at every stripe, he says, "Woe! woe! to Jerusalem!" For seven years and five months he cries. At last, as he cries upon the wall, "Woe to the city! woe to the temple!" a stone from one of the engines smites him; and he dies with this last wail upon his lips, "Woe to myself!"

The miseries of want are thus described in Holy Scripture:—

"Thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee." (Deut. xxviii. 53.)

The sad scene can be looked upon.

Famine slays thousands and tens of thousands in the streets and lanes of the city. Children snatch the bread from their parents' lips. Mothers take from their little ones, dying in their arms, the last drop. Men run about furiously in search of food, and break open the houses wherein they think that any is hidden. No table is spread in all the

city : men eat secretly, and in haste. Look at those poor wretches flying to the Roman camp, their bodies are puffed up, and swollen by the famine, as with a dropsy. They greedily eat the food which is placed before them, and then burst asunder, so greatly are they diseased. Girdles, old shoes, wisps of hay, and the most revolting things, are greedily devoured. Here are poor wretches impaled, to make them give up a loaf of bread, or a handful of barley-meal. There many go out, night by night, exposing themselves to death, in order to gather grass and wild herbs for food.

The Romans catch these wanderers, scourge and crucify them. Along the valleys, and on the hills, five hundred, and sometimes more, are crucified daily ; but now there is no more wood for crosses, and no more room for bodies. Some escape to the Roman camp, having first swallowed their gold and jewels. The poor wretches are slain and disembowelled, in hope of finding the hidden treasure. Six hundred thousand dead bodies are thrown out at the gates. The living, as they walk, fall down dead ; where they fall, there they lie ; and the passers by do not weep.

The Roman General shrinks from the accumulated horrors of valleys full of dead bodies moving with putrefaction. He lifts up his hand to God, that not he, but the people have caused this trouble.

What more can desperation lead to? It can produce a scene still more horrible.

A lady of rank and wealth is in a noble house, but has been robbed of all her food. The famine pierces her bones and marrow. She forgets a mother's feelings. Looks upon the infant who is drawing life from her bosom. "Be thou my food," says she, and slays her son. The savour of the roasted flesh draws hungry men, they run like ravenous beasts to the prey, they entreat, they threaten, they use violence; at last she uncovers what remaineth of her son, and says, "Eat, this is my own son; I have eaten of him myself." They shrink back in horror. "If you are more tender than a mother," she says, "let me have what remains, that I may eat it also." How fearfully was the Word of God fulfilled! "The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon

the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear : for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates." (Deut. xxviii. 56, 57.)

Shishak, King of Egypt, had taken Jerusalem in Rehoboam's days, and marched away with Solomon's golden shields. Nebuchadnezzar had burned the city and temple ; and the light of the fire reached to Babylon, in order to shew us Daniel, who wept and prayed. Ptolemy, the son of Lagos, had overcome it ; so had Antiochus, Pompey, Sosius, and Herod ; but in no conquest did the people suffer so much, or so deservedly, as in the siege and capture by Titus. By sword and famine, one million one hundred thousand perished, and ninety-seven thousand were sold as slaves. When the Roman army appeared against it, great multitudes had come from the country to keep

the Feast of the Passover, so that the city was full of people. There was at first a little delay in hostile operations, and the Christians profited by it so as to make their escape. The Roman army then formed three camps, raised banks and towers ; and afterwards, in order to have the people as in a net, built a strong and high wall of five miles circuit in three days.

Let the mind's eye rest upon the last fearful conflict. The soldiers, though many times repulsed, come on step by step ; walls, towers, gates, are taken ; and the terrible battering ram breaks down the ramparts with resistless might. Titus fights like one of the common soldiers, and they, moved with Cæsar's spirit, are for ever breaking through every obstacle, piercing the thickest ranks, and pressing into the Jewish midst. The Jews, as wild beasts at bay, more terrible in despair, drive back their foes again and again. Swords are dipped in blood, and garments clotted with it. Breaches are stopped up with slain, and the narrow lanes made impassable. Fire adds terror to, and makes visible in the dark night, fearful scenes of slaughter. The dead and the living are con-

sumed together. The gold of the temple, the silver coated gates, with Jew and Roman, are fuel for the flames. Hand to hand, and foot to foot, they fight ; from morning till night, and from night till morning. The walls are taken, but the temple and citadel remain. Titus wishes to spare the temple to be a noble trophy of his victory ; but God has decreed otherwise. The fire which is put to the gates, spreads to the galleries. Round about, and upon the altar, lie the dead, and blood runs in streams ; but the fire, with hot tongue, licks up both flesh and blood. A torch is thrown by a soldier into one of the chambers, the whole north side is wrapped in flames, and the holy of holies takes fire. Priests fight, and people fight. Those who are not slain, throw themselves into the flames, and perish with the temple. Thousands die who have fled thither as to a place of safety ; for a false prophet had said, that in the temple they should be delivered.

When Titus entered the city after the victory, and saw the height of the solid towers, the greatness of the stones, and the closeness of the joints, he said : “ God has fought for us. He it is who cast the Jews from these fortifica-

tions. What could machines, or the hand of man, do against these towers?"

Carry back the mind to a period forty years before this desolation. Behold the merciful Son of God rebuking the hypocrisy and pride of the rich, walking through the country, healing the sick, feeding the multitudes, warning them of the coming desolation, and weeping over the beloved city: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. xxiii. 37, 38.) Notwithstanding this warning, the signs wrought in witness of its truth, the eloquence and holiness, the power and wisdom, of Him who uttered it; the people preferred a robber and murderer, and crucified the Holy One.

The rejection of Christ was the crowning sin of the Jewish people. This took away their sceptre, caused their priests to be slain, their sacrifices to be refused, their temple to be destroyed, their tribes to be mingled, and

their genealogies to be lost. They had been as a light set upon a hill, this quenched their light in darkness. Once nigh to God, this put them very far off. Once, as a comely bride arrayed for the espousals, they lifted up their eyes to their Maker, their Husband ; this made them mourn as a widow who is desolate. O ! that they would consider, now in the day of their adversity, and call upon the Lord ; look to the pierced One, and accept Him whom their fathers refused ; then should it again be well with them.

The prophet says, referring to that period :

“ Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken ; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate : but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah : for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.” (Is. lxii. 3, 4.)

CHAPTER III.

THE HEAVENLY PLAINS.

Daniel's Vision—Martyrs—The Redeemed Host.

IN thinking of the future overthrow of all earthly thrones, we may lift up our minds to heaven, and with the prophet Daniel's eyes, behold a glorious picture. The Ancient of Days is seated, with garments white as snow, and face shining as the sun. The throne, like a flame; and as a chariot, with wheels of fire. A beautiful and glorious stream of light goes forth from before him, thousand thousands minister, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand around, judgment is set, and the books are opened. Men meet their God. The dead, small and great, rise up from their graves, and out of the sea; the penitent Thief from paradise, and Dives from the gulf; Pontius Pilate who condemned the Holy One, and weeping Women who bewailed their Saviour.

Behold in the vision, as did Daniel and

John, the meek and lowly Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, and brought near to the Ancient of Days. He receives dominion, and glory, and a kingdom. All judgment is given to Him, almighty power is placed in His right hand, and in His left the book of life. He is girded with everlasting truth, has the flowing robe of spotless righteousness, honour and majesty surround His throne. His words are as a sharp two-edged sword to destroy the wicked, but as most melodious music to the children of the kingdom; and in the hand of His power are seven stars of light. Before the great white throne, whereon He is seated, bows every knee, and to Him confesses every tongue; while the heaven opens as a scroll, and the earth passes away. (Dan. vii. 9, 10; Rev. i. 13—16; xx. 11, 12.)

You may people the glorious plains with all the great captains of the world, and the disturbers of nations; but you must not depict the masters of battle in the moment of victory, nor with helmet, cuirass and sword; they must be brought on their knees to receive sentence. In an earthly picture you may

paint Cæsar with the head of Pompey at his feet, let Cyrus rush in his scythed chariot with barbed horsemen, and gather around Alexander the glittering band who crossed the Granicus, but you must not hang such a picture in heaven. On the left hand of the throne must be terrible clouds, men and women in prison attire, whose faces gather blackness, as righteous judgment encircles their limbs with the fetters of eternal wretchedness. On the right of the throne there must be palms in the hands of the people, white robes on their bodies, and crowns of pure gold on their heads.

Place on the right hand all your dear ones, the noble-minded and the true. Take Wickliffe—you recollect how boldly, even in sickness, he denounced the evil deeds of the friars ; heal his sickness with leaves from the tree of life. John Huss, of Bohemia, and Jerome, of Prague, you may remove from the fiery stake, and cool their anguish in the crystal stream which goes out from the throne of God and the Lamb. Bold Luther, pious Melancthon, our own Latimer, Ridley, Bradford, and why not Cranmer ? you may place on high ; but do

not let Tetzels, who sold those wicked indulgences, be on the same side as Luther; and forget not that Melancthon, when asked, while on the bed of death, what he wanted, said, "Nothing but heaven."

With regard to Bradford, who, while on earth, was rather tall, with a faint blush upon his face, it will be well for you to draw him as he stands, about nine o'clock in the morning of the first of July, 1555, at the stake in Smithfield. He puts off his outer garments, and lifting up his eyes and hands towards heaven, says, "O England, England, repent of thy sins, repent of thy sins, beware of idolatry: beware of antichrists: take heed they do not deceive thee!" Turning to the youthful martyr, John Leaf, about twenty years old, fading in the spring of life, who is to suffer with him, he says, "Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall sup with the Lord this night." Clothe them both with the righteousness of Christ, let not the least smell of fire remain on them, but pour on their heads precious ointment, and place them among the noble army of Martyrs at the right hand of Christ.

“ Their blood is shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim—
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar, and to anticipate the skies.”—*Cowper*.

Latimer and Ridley may be put side by side. The former was, to look upon, a withered and crooked old man of eighty-five years; but when he threw off his prison garments, the hope of heaven lifted up his head, and he stood nobly erect in his shroud. Ridley, the most learned man of his day, was of small stature, and fifty-five years of age. They are both chained to a stake, placed upon a piece of ground on the north side of Balliol College, Oxford, in the year 1555, the sixteenth day of October. Latimer exclaims, “ We shall this day, brother, light such a candle in England as shall never be put out.” Then striking his face with his hands, and bathing then in the flames, the blood runs down from his heart, and he dies without the least sign of pain. Round Ridley the wood is thick, and the flame cannot get through; his legs are nearly burnt away, and yet he lives. At last he cries with a loud voice, “ Into thy hands,

O Lord, I commend my spirit. Lord, receive my soul!" and then gives up the ghost. Remember that the light of that fire adds brightness to their crowns of glory.

"Although they seemed to be in fiery pain,
The fire served only for our eyes to cheat,
Like Jesus' breath of balm, 'twas cool and sweet."

Life through Death.

Now look for Cranmer, a man, sixty-seven years of age; who, often in error, has truly repented. He is in the fire, chained to a stake, over against Balliol College, the eighteenth day of March, 1556. Listen to him speaking of his recantation, "This is the hand that wrote, and therefore it shall first suffer punishment." Then thrusting it out to the flames, he held it there as an unworthy hand. Drawing it in to wipe the drops of anguish from his face, he held it forth again; and as it burned, said, till it was all consumed, "this unworthy right hand, this unworthy right hand!" His last cry yet rings in our ears: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Will not such a man be great in heaven? and if he committed sins, who has not? and if

faulty, who is not? are not his sins forgiven, and his faults forgotten? Place him near to the throne; and with him the eighty-five who died by the hands of cruel men that self-same year, signing with their blood the bond of fellowship with Christ.

Now gather all the poor who believe in Jesus: sorrowing women; those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, and all who walk in the footsteps of Christ. Souls from the dungeon whence prayer has risen, from the sands of the desert, the deep mines of the earth, the boundless ocean, the stately palace, and the lowly cottage. Take Abel, and the children of Seth; Noah, and the sons of Shem; Abraham, and Israel's children. Bring turbaned Turks, dark Negros, copper Indians, yellow Chinese, and the white men of every tribe. Fill the vast space of heaven with the countless host, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. Salvation is on their heads, righteousness in their hearts, and peace in their hands. They ride upon the white horses of heaven, and follow a righteous leader whose vesture is dipped in blood, whose name is Faithful and True, and

his title, King of kings, and Lord of lords. They are not going forth to war, but returning from victory over Sin, Death, and Satan. Instead of spears, they have rays of light; no emblem of mythology on their banners, but scenes from the lives of saints, and the triumphs of the Cross. Stars and diadems glitter on the breasts and heads of the soldiers, while heavenly light illumines the whole horizon. Every face is turned with wondering love to Jesus; forms of beauty, the angelic sons of immortality, fly upon the wing by millions; while upon every knoll and eminence of the heavenly plains, bathed in glorious lustre, are thousands and tens of thousands looking on; and here and there family groups, with little babes whose angels always see the face of God. Now behold the mighty influence which pervades the mass. Banners wave, and every hand is lifted up in praise; the circle of heaven is glorious with vermillion, it glows like an ocean of amber, and is of a purer blue than any Italian sky; a throne rises up like some glorious mountain, the mighty God is seen upon it, his form is that of the Son of Man, a gentle, soothing,

sweet, melodious hymn is heard, then human voices break forth in one mighty shout of triumph: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. v. 12.)

"Oh! were I there!
Where all the air
With tuneful sounds is ringing;
Where the saints are evermore
Holy, Holy, singing!

Jesu, my Rest!
Thou ever blest!
O! help my poor endeavour!
Let me, in Thy glorious light,
Shine before Thee ever!"

CHAPTER IV.

EARTHLY EMPIRES.

Men, individually and nationally—Egyptians—
Assyrians—Babylonians.

WE know, for Scripture teaches it plainly, that all men will stand before God, and that every one will receive according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad. This should lead us to self-examination, and to holiness of life.

We ought never to presume to place ourselves, even in imagination, among the heavenly host, unless the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit, and our life confirms the testimony, that we are the children of God.

We are made the children of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are fitted for heaven by the purging of our sins with His precious blood, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. (Rom. iv. 16; Heb. ix. 14; Titus iii. 5.)

Let us now pass from the consideration of

our own selves, as individuals, to the contemplation of the world's empires.

We have no reason to think, that nations will exist in their corporate or national character in another world. Men, there, whether of Europe or Asia, Africa or America, will not be judged collectively, but individually; every man for his own sins. Such being the case, it is reasonable to expect, that the history of the rise, decline, and fall of empires, will prove that national guilt is punished in this world. This grows into a strong conviction, when we observe that all past empires have been used for the establishment of God's own purposes. They have been lifted up, as an axe in the hand of the hewer, for purposes of judgment; and laid aside in dishonour when they, themselves, were to be punished. The whole world seems to have moved round a religious centre. All history gravitates to Palestine. Past records, present events, and prophecies of the future, tend to a divinely appointed end. The way of God is seen in former ages, like the path of the sun upon the ocean, as he sinks to rest. The hand of Providence is weaving all present events into a

glorious robe for Christ in heaven. The future is made bright with the hope of the restitution of all things. (Acts iii. 21.)

“ O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
 Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see,
 Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
 His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy ?

Thus heavenward all things tend. For all were once
 Perfect, and all must be at length restor'd.”

Cowper.

It will, therefore, be refreshing and instructive to look upon nations as thus brought into immediate connection with God. History is often nothing more than a record of the sin and folly of man ; but if we can trace the footsteps of righteous judgment overtaking the sin, and the goodness of God teaching men wisdom by means of their folly, we shall better understand our duty as citizens, and our position as a people.

The Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians were used to chasten the Jews. They were lifted up for the purpose of punishment, allowed to win themselves a name, and, after

that, their own sins were made to cast them down. The Persians were called to restore Israel ; Alexander to protect them, and to conquer all other people. The Syrian kings had it in their hearts to destroy the nation ; but the Romans with a strong hand preserved, even while oppressing them.

Where are now the Egyptians who were once so wise ?

They are still in the plains through which the Nile runs, but their wisdom has become folly, and their strength, weakness : of all people in the world, the Egyptians are now the most stupid. Pretending to honour God, and finding His image everywhere, especially in that which lived, they bowed down to things animate and inanimate. Nature held up to them all the forms of existence as so many mirrors in which the Deity was seen, and as so many steps by which man might ascend to Him ; but they, instead of going up, went down ; did not find Divine wisdom in the beast, but the beast in Divine wisdom. Animals the most vile and contemptible, crocodiles and cats, even creeping things, did they honour as God. The nation which carried civilization

to the highest pitch, followed ridiculous and stupid idolatry to the lowest depth.

The Egyptians rise up before us in the form of a mighty pyramid, which entombs the memory, has hidden the names, and buried the bodies, of mighty kings. Our imagination should write upon the sides of it: civilization, learning, science, apart from God, only serve to dig a grave, or build a tomb, for all the hopes and glory of man.

Where are the Assyrians?

Buried with the ruins of Nineveh.

The Assyrians appear as a man like Nimrod, who is a mighty hunter, firm in will and determined in action; first a slayer of beasts, and then a conqueror of men. (Gen. x. 9.)

Ages after this a prophet appears, who cries, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The king arises from his throne, lays aside the royal robe, clothes himself in sackcloth, and sits in ashes. A whole nation weeps. Neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; it is a mighty fast. The people turn from their evil deeds, king and nobles repent, all cry to God. He hears their prayer, spares

the city, and forgives the people. (Jonah iii. 4—10.)

In after ages all the bold and noble features, seen in Nimrod, become effeminate; and the people return from penitence to sin, like the washed sow to her wallowing in the mire. The last king, Sardanapalus, luxurious and cowardly, comes before us dressed as a woman, painted, and seated at a distaff. He is rich and gluttonous, idle and infamous, lives as a dog, and has the epitaph of a pig.* Arbaces, his Median satrap, and Belesys, a Babylonian priest, rise against him. Thrice is the king victorious; but then defeated, he flies to the capital. After two years' siege, two miles and a half of the city wall is destroyed by an overflow of the Tigris; he commands a funeral pile to be made in his palace, and kindling it, he perishes: then Assyria falls into the hands of the Medes.

Nimrod, Jonah, and Sardanapalus; the first in the field; the second in the city proclaiming judgment; the last burning in his palace,

* "Hæc habeo quæ edi, quæque exsaturata libido
Hansit: ab illa jacent multa et præclara relictæ."

Justin i. 3.

What I consumed in eating and drinking, that alone I
• had; as for all nobler things I passed them by.

with his women, eunuchs, and treasures ; are the beginning, the middle, and the end of Assyria.

Where are the Babylonians ?

A great head of gold is a scriptural image of the wealth and power of their mighty kingdom. (Dan. ii. 37, 38.) While we gaze at it, the temple of Belus rises before us in beautiful lines :

* * * "The tow'ring fane
Of Bel, Chaldean Jove, surpassing far
That Doric temple, which the Elean chiefs
Rais'd to their thunderer from the spoils of war ;
Or that Ionic, where th' Ephesian bow'd
To Dian, queen of heaven. Eight towers arise,
Each above each, immeasurable height,
A monument, at once, of Eastern pride
And slavish superstition."

Judah Restored.

Listen to the narration of the monarch's dream.

"I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, was strong, the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: the leaves thereof were fair, the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had

shadow under it, the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven ; he cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit : let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches : nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field ; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth : let his heart be changed from man's, let a beast's heart be given unto him ; and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones : to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." (Dan iv. 10—17.)

This tree is a type of the king, Nebuchadnezzar, who beheld it in vision.

He keeps his court in yonder palace. His early youth has not been warned to reject with holy fortitude those luxurious baits, more

perilous than storm or quicksand, poverty or shame, which allure the soul of man to ruin. Viewing, from the lofty ramparts, all the splendour of a noble city ; marble towers, bulwarks of strength ; costly palaces, graceful with beauty ; brazen gates, works of skilful art ; pendent gardens, the wonder of a world ; magazines of wealth, proudly flowing Euphrates, and wide-extended empire ; he forgets that he is but man, forgets his God, and cries : “ Is not this great Babylon, that I have builded by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty ? ” While he speaks these words, a voice falls from heaven ; “ O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken ; the kingdom is departed from thee.” He is driven, the same hour, from the cheerful haunts of men ; and makes his dwelling with the beasts of the field. He eats grass like the ox, his body is wet with the dew from heaven, his hairs grow like eagles’ feathers, and his nails like birds’ claws, till the end of seven years. Then he lifts up his eyes to heaven, understanding returns to his mind, love to his heart, and, going to his palace, he blesses and honours the Most High, whose dominion is everlasting.

Nebuchadnezzar being laid in the grave, Belshazzar, his grandson, ascends the throne.

There is a mighty army thundering at the gates. It is the king's last night, but he knows it not, and holds a feast to a thousand of his lords. The vaulted roof resounds with shouts of mirth ; princes, concubines, and wives, with wanton flattery, laud the monarch's words ; what he says, they say ; what he commands, they do. " Hail ! mighty king." " Sun of heaven !" " Light of the world !" " Hail, Belshazzar, live for ever !" Thus they praise. The king proclaims, " Let poverty, snarling age, and dull piety, declaim against these joys ; call their dull feelings, virtue ; and their harshness, goodness ; but let my active spirit, and genial soul, be crowned with pleasure." Then rising, he calls for the rich spice of the East, blooming flowers, the laughing goblet, sweet music, and her hand-maid poetry. " I will not have a wish or thought that shall not be gratified. Let us taste of pleasure's cup till we grow giddy, and think ourselves to be immortal." Then spring up quickly lively strains of music, and flying joy circles every head with a wreath of flowers : while faces, blushing with

the tinted wine, are lighted up with beaming eyes casting glances of fugitive delight. The king's eyes roll around, rapture fires his brain, his heart dances to the flattering song, and he feels as were he god. More wine is filled, and he quaffs, in thought, immortal draughts. He rises, all are stilled, and thus he speaks: "When the Jews were conquered by our mighty fathers, the choice treasures of their temple, and the sacred symbols of their ancient faith, were brought to Babylon: bring forth those holy relics, never yet given to human use, their richness will adorn our wine, and bestow a yet untasted delight upon the pleasures of the banquet." The sacred golden flagons, goblets, and cups, rich with gems, and dazzling, gleam upon the monarch's board. "Fill that noble chalice to the brim." It is filled, and the other vessels for the nobles. Then the king and princes, his wives and concubines, drink out of them, and praise their idols, pouring libations with the golden bowls from the altar at Jerusalem. Suddenly the silence of lonely solitude seals every ear, and closes every mouth: an awful pause. On the wall are traced, with unearthly fingers, mystic words:

“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.”

The song is turned into a cry, and the wine is as blood. The king's countenance changes, his thoughts trouble him, the joints of his loins are loosed, and his knees smite one against another. Now he feels, when failing limbs refuse to bear him up, that he is mortal. Dark shadows cross his eyes, yet not so drear as those upon his mind. Again and again he looks, as one unwilling, led by fascination, to the fatal words which darkly lour, and yet gleam with fiery judgment, upon the wall.

Daniel, the prophet of God, is brought in with haste. “Interpret those words, and thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, have a chain of gold about thy neck, and be the third ruler in the kingdom,” exclaims the king. The prophet answers, “All thy gifts, and thy crown itself, could never satisfy an immortal spirit. I aspire, O king, beyond thy power of giving, to a crown unfading and eternal. As for thee, this is the Almighty's will: God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Thou art weighed in the balances, and found want-

ing. Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

The prophet of God is then beautifully arrayed, the banquet breaks up amid confusion and slaughter, and that night Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans is slain. (Dan. v. 24—31.)

"The pleasant sound
Of viol and of harp shall charm no more!
Nor song of Syrian damsels shall be heard,
Responsive to the lute's luxurious note :
But the loud bittern's cry, the raven's croak,
The bat's fell scream, the lonely owl's dull plaint,
And ev'ry hideous bird, with ominous shriek,
Shall scare affrighted silence from thy walls.
While desolation, snatching from the hand
Of time the scythe of ruin, sits aloft,
Or stalks in dreadful majesty abroad.
I see th' exterminating fiend advance,
Ev'n now I see her glare with horrid joy,
See towers imperial mould'ring at her touch.
She glances on the broken battlement,
She eyes the crumbling column, and enjoys
The work of ages prostrate in the dust,
Then, pointing to the mischiefs she has made,
Exulting cries, This once was Babylon !"

Hannah More.

CHAPTER V.

EARTHLY EMPIRES.

The Medo-Persian—Alexander—His Portrait—The Siege of Tyre—Alexandria.

IN the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, the Medo-Persian Empire is represented by the breasts and arms of silver. (Dan. ii. 32—39.) In the vision seen by Daniel (vii. 5), the Empire is likened unto a bear, raising itself up on one side, having three ribs in its mouth, and commanded to devour much flesh. It was inferior to the Empire of Babylon, as is silver in comparison with gold; and rose up on one side, by the Persians surpassing the Medes. The three ribs represent Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt, conquered by the Persians; and fitly spoken of as between the teeth of a bear, for they were much ground and oppressed. The command, "devour much flesh," was fulfilled in fire and blood. The torments inflicted by the Persians cannot be read without feelings

of horror. They flayed men alive, and for the offence of one man destroyed whole villages and towns; their cruel hand did not spare even children.

If we picture to ourselves a handsome youth standing before a voluptuous old man, and with a few simple and respectful words rebuking the gluttony, drunkenness, and effeminacy of the Medes; if then we think of him as a wise king, and listen to his words of wisdom; "A king should watch, that his people may live in peace and safety; burden himself with cares, that they may be free from them; choose what is good for them, and remove all that is hurtful; delight in seeing them increase; expose his own person in their defence, and care for them as a shepherd for his flock;" we have a view of the temperance and sagacity of the great Cyrus, who conquered Cræsus, took Babylon, and freed Israel. (Ezra i. 1—4.) The Persians were then simple in manners, and brave in battle.

If we lay Cyrus in the grave, and look at his two sons, Cambyzes the elder madly slaying Smerdis the younger; and then at the line of kings living in pleasure, we shall see luxury

and idolatry marching hand in hand, while cowardice follows in their train. A magnificent chariot is dedicated to the sun, fire is invoked in their sacrifices, and carried before the king when he marches. The people look at the sun when he shines, and the moon as she walks in brightness; their heart is secretly enticed, and with the mouth they kiss their hand in adoration of the lights of heaven. No wonder that, separating good from the Author of good, they fall into evil, and become the slaves of every vice. No wonder that their light goes out in darkness. No wonder that men clothed with brass, the Greeks, shining as suns, overcome the sun's worshippers. We see Xerxes leading an innumerable army of soldiers into Greece, and entombing them there; Thermopylæ, a narrow pass about twenty-five feet wide, being their gate of death. (B.C. 480.) We see his sailors given as food to the fishes at the battle of Salamis; Themistocles, a noble Athenian, casting down ships and men into the depths of the sea. We see everywhere the pride and luxury, the folly and cruelty, the presumption and cowardice, of the degenerate Persians.

They lie in myriads, dumb and friendless ; no more health, nor strength, in the dark chambers of their grave. The parasites who bent the knee, the monarch whose flashing eye filled surrounding slaves with terror, the beggar who crouched for a morsel of bread, are all equal now. Where are the fathers? the illustrious line? and princesses with the damask and the lily cheek, and bodies of perfect form? Their words of eloquence could not charm the ear of death, that his feet should linger, and hand stay to smite. The bright eye and fiery heart, with the rosy lips of beauty, are dim and cold ; yea, even their dust has been scattered to the winds. How frail is human life ! and short the longest period that nations live ! The end of all ungodly men and nations is very sad, and must be so ; their bright days go down in dark and dismal night. Lord ! cause us to live to Thee.

On the banks of a small river, (B.C. 334,) called the Granicus, is an immense army assembled with all the terrible lustre and array of war. On the opposite shore appears another army, fewer in number, and in less bright array, but led by Alexander. On a fiery

charger he plunges into the stream, nobles and soldiers eagerly follow, and with heroic bravery put to flight their less courageous foes. Follow this man to sieges and battles, through rapid floods, and over craggy rocks. Soldiers are slain around him, but he remains unhurt. Huge stones are cast from precipices upon him, and yet he is untouched. An axe is uplifted to cleave his head in the conflict, the javelins of the enemy press against him as he stands alone in the fortress of the foe ; yet he lives, and lives to conquer.

His victorious arms are not stayed till he lays the foundation of an empire not for himself, but for the spread of the Grecian tongue : that the parables and miracles of Jesus might be told in the best and most fitting language. Age after age men wonder at the tale of his deeds, the thousands he slew, the millions he conquered ; and, in their wonder about the man, too often forget the Providence of God.

In drawing his portrait, take the authority of Bacon, Montesquieu, and Schlegel, that he was one of the greatest among mortals, a perfect master of the art of war, a sagacious politician, of cultivated and elegant taste. He

delights in splendour, and is a patron of literature and the arts. So fortunate in all undertakings, that to carry his figure, in gold or silver, about the person, was considered lucky. His stature is lofty, and mien most beautiful; his hair golden, and gracefully flowing. He has a long neck, ruddy fair face, large lustrous eyes, and an air of majesty. Like Alcibiades, he has the fashionable Greek habit of leaning his head a little on one side. Lycippus, the sculptor, in making a brass statue of the hero, designed the face looking up to heaven, and the head gently and gracefully turned a little over the left shoulder. In anger his countenance is terrible to the beholder. Apelles, in painting him holding the thunderbolt, represented this with a subtle stroke of art, in dark features upon his face. The head of Alexander, as found on silver coins, is bound with a fillet, the hair richly curled, the eyes open and large, the nostrils wide, and the mouth finely shaped.

Alas! in all the strength and beauty of Alexander were weakness and deformity. His great vice, drunkenness, was common to his father and his country. Drunkenness was as

national in Macedonia, as it is now in Sweden. He conquered kingdoms, but could not subdue himself; he set himself over Greece, cast down Asia, and then fell before the idol of his own vanity. He escaped the dangers of siege and combat to perish in a fever brought on by excesses at the banquet, digging his own grave with the teeth of intemperance. God raised him up. Sin cast him down. (B.C. 323.)

“The warrior’s arm

Lies nerveless on the pillow of its shame;
Hush’d is the stormy voice, and quench’d the blaze
Of his red eyeball. Yesterday his name
Was mighty on the earth. To-day—’tis what?
The meteor of the night of distant years.”

Henry Kirke White.

Behold this wonderful man before Tyre. That city dared alone to oppose the march of the conqueror. He laid siege, but in vain; some of his soldiers had been murdered, his army despaired of success, but he would not retreat. He was determined not to lose, but to gain fame, by the wealth and strength of the place. His design was daring, and, at last, success proved it to be wise. Surrounded by a wall one hundred and fifty feet in height, built upon an island which was half

a mile from the main land, the city might almost laugh at his efforts. One of the greatest of the Babylonian monarchs, Nebuchadnezzar, had made an army serve against it, till every head was bald, and every shoulder peeled, and after thirteen years' siege, took it ; but with so much toil and loss, that he is said to have gone away without reward. (Ezek. xxvi. 7—14 ; xxix. 18.) Two hundred and seventy years had passed away since then, and no enemy had been able to conquer the Queen of the Sea. Alexander looked around, saw the ruins of the old city, and thought that he should be able to overcome the living by means of the dead. A vast mound was formed of the ruins, it reached from the continent to the island, the enemy burned it, the water washed it down, but the foundations remained deep in the sea. The warrior looked round again, took the soil, the rubbish, scraped up the dust, cast every remnant of the old city into the water ; and, at length, after seven months' blockade, marched as upon dry ground, with all the terrors of battle, into that renowned and strong place where the merchants had been princes, and rulers of the sea. (Ezek. xxvi.)

As soon as he had burned Tyre, and brought Egypt to destruction, he formed the plan of making the empire, which he purposed to establish, not only the throne of dominion, but the centre of commerce. Though his passions drove him, at times, to the wildest actions, and maddest undertakings; he had talents which fitted him not only to conquer, but govern the world. Had he been but good as well as great, he would have been a blessing to every race of men. In the siege of Tyre, he saw the power and wealth that were won by commerce, and, to secure them for himself, founded a great city, Alexandria, upon the banks of one of the mouths of the Nile. So well had he chosen the site, that, by means of the Mediterranean sea, and the Arabian gulf, it commanded the trade of the East and the West. So long as the Grecian Empire ruled in Egypt and the East, through all the changes from the times of the Ptolemies, until the time when a passage was discovered to the East Indies, round the Cape of Good Hope, by Vasco de Gama, in A.D. 1498, the commerce of the Indies flowed in the channel which his wisdom had marked out, and through the city which his foresight had

buildd. The power of his genius in working such a mighty change in commerce, deserves equal admiration with his valour which wrought such a vast revolution in the empire. The diffusion of the language and arts of Greece, and the great additions made to natural science and geography, better deserve our attention ; than the victorious progress of the Macedonian arms from the plain of Thebes to the banks of the Danube, and from the Hellespont to the Nile, the Jaxartes, and the Indus.

“ Reflect that life and death, affecting sounds,
Are only varied modes of endless being ;
Reflect that life, like every other blessing,
Derives its value from its use alone :
Not for itself, but for a nobler end,
Th’ Eternal gave it ; and that end is virtue.
When inconsistent with a greater good,
Reason commands to cast the less away :
Thus life, with loss of wealth, is well preserved,
And virtue cheaply saved with loss of life.”

Dr. Johnson.

CHAPTER VI.

GREEK CHARACTER.

Love of the marvellous—Alcibiades and others—Socrates—
The Lord Jesus.

THE Greeks, the most famed of all men for genius, were the world's mental giants; yet, among them, as in Alexander, were the elements of weakness. The Athenians, deemed the wisest of the Grecians, were deceived by the following silly trick.

Pisistratus, who lived in Athens about the time of Cræsus king of Lydia, had been expelled; but some of the great men desired his return: and Megacles, leader of a political party, having quarrelled with Lycurgus, sent a herald to ask the banished senator to marry his daughter, with a promise, in case of compliance, to raise him to the sovereignty. The exile consented to take the daughter, in order that he might go back to his home with power. The return was thus brought about. There was a woman named Phya, very handsome,

but wanting three fingers, whom they dressed in a suit of armour, taught how she should behave, placed in a chariot, and then drove to the city, where they made this proclamation:—

“O, Athenians, receive with good will Pisistratus, whom Minerva, honouring above all men, herself leads back to her own citadel.”*

The people believed that the woman was the goddess, adored the human being, and received back the exile.

This historical fact shews that the Greeks, though generally free from foolish simplicity, and more acute than other nations, were liable to be led astray by a love of the marvellous ; and that their desire to tell, or to hear of some new thing, would lead them to believe a lie. (Acts xvii. 21.)

The Gospel was foolishness unto them, but their own legends about men that were called gods they counted wisdom. Verily the foolishness of the Gospel is wiser than the wisdom of men, and the weakness of God stronger than

* Ὁ Ἀθηναῖος, δέκεσθε ἀγαθῷ νόμῳ Πεισίστρατον, τὸν αὐτὴ ἡ Ἀθηναίη τιμήσασα ἀνθρώπων μάλιστα κατὰγει εἰς τὴν ἰωυτῆς ἀκρόπολιν.—*Herod. Hist., Lib. i., cap. 60.*

the might of the world. In the legend there was a fabulous connection of the human with the divine ; but in the Gospel a true union of God with man. The wisdom of the Greek has been put to shame for taking the false, and refusing the true ; and the ancient genius, by the righteous judgment of God, has buried itself under the modern superstitions of this people : their light has become gross darkness. It is written ; “ I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” (1 Cor. i. 19.)

In drawing a picture of the Greek character, take Alcibiades for a study : and in the astonishing beauty of his person, see the gracefulness of the nation ; in his flowing robe, the looseness of their manners ; and in the sauntering step, bent neck, and lisp of that celebrated Athenian, find negligence adorned with artistic skill, and language, even in its defective state, marvellously beautiful.

Further :—

In the great strength of Pythagoras, and reputed long life of more than a hundred years ; the exercise of his body in racing, wrestling, throwing the plummet, leaping, and

anointing the limbs ; see the means that were taken to strengthen the frame, and to unite a sound mind with a healthy body. No other nation has equalled the Greeks in their high regard for physical health, and in their efforts to secure it.

Again :—

When we recollect the characteristics of this finely formed race ; their dark complexions, black hair and eyes, and beautiful women ; their lively ardent disposition portrayed in fondness for gay and showy amusements ; their love of splendour, shining in the golden crown and white robe of Pythagoras, and the elegant war-like adornments of Xenophon ; we have before us a people cheerful and witty, endowed with clear, vigorous, and philosophical minds : yet, destitute of that true knowledge of God, in comparison with which all earthly wisdom is but folly.

“ Though the bright beams of science shed
Their choicest influence on thy head ;
And though the classic page impart
Its raptures on thy glowing heart,
If Christ the Lord thou dost not know,
Wretched and ignorant art thou.”

Socrates may be taken as another, but not a pleasant, study.

He is thus drawn by Rabelais.*

“To have eyed his outside, and estimated him by his external appearance, you would not have given the slice of an onion for him ; so deformed was he in body, and ridiculous in gesture. He had a sharp pointed nose, with the look of a bull, and the countenance of a fool. He was simple in carriage, rustic in apparel, poor in fortune, and unhappy in his wives. Always laughing, and merrily

* “ Le voyant au dehors, et l'estimans par l'exteriore apparence, n'en eussiez donné ung coupeau d'oignon, tant laid il estoit de corps, et ridicule en son maintien, le nez pointu, le regard d'ung taureau, le visaige d'ung fol, simple en meurs, rustiq en vestimens, paoure de fortune, infortuné en femmes. Toudiours riant, tousiours beuuant d'aultan a ung chascun, tousiours se guabelant, tousiours dissimulant son dinin sçauoir. Mais eussiez au dedans trouué une celeste et impre-
ciable drogue, entendement plus que humain, vertus merueilleuses, couraige invincible, sobresse nonpareille, contentement certain, assurance parfaicte, deprisement incroyable de tout ce pourquoy les humains, tant veig-
lent, courent, trauaillent, nauigent, et bataillent.”—
Œuvres de F. Rabelais, p. 2. Paris, 1845.

carousing, with continual jibes and jeers, by these means concealing his divine knowledge. But you would have found within a heavenly and an inestimable drug, a more than human understanding, an admirable virtue, unconquerable courage, inimitable sobriety, certain contentment, perfect confidence, and an incredible contempt for all that about which men do so much watch, run, labour, travel, and fight."

Socrates failed personally in all that is comely in appearance, and Greek literature fails in all those high graces and inward excellences which are found so abundantly in the Word of God.

If we look at Socrates riding on a stick to amuse his boys, we see Grecian mirth and levity; and yet, in his piping and dancing, he was full of learning. The Greeks, amidst the licentiousness of their mythology, the folly of their legends, and the capricious jealousy of their leaders, had a wonderful philosophy, an unequalled literature, and invincible valour.

He, with a clownish look, and a foolish countenance, had an immortal understanding, and superhuman wisdom; they, delighting in boxing and wrestling, leaping and racing, were

men of elegant tastes, well skilled in poetry, music, and the art of pleasing. Nevertheless, there was the spirit of a quack in all their greatness; and the mountebank's garb under the philosopher's cloak: for Socrates thought, or seemed to think, that a kind of familiar spirit attended him, and warned him against any impending danger; and yet this spirit did not preserve him from an unjust death, (B.C. 399): and the people, though they sometimes acted as if moved by more than human intelligence, came speedily to ruin; for all that was wonderful in Greece, and its great cities, Thebes, Argos, Sparta, and Athens, were shut up in Achaia; were all buried in one province of Rome.

Socrates may be said to have enjoyed the best training that an Athenian of those days could command. He had, moreover, the civic crown awarded to his valour; was a member of the deliberative senate (*βουλή*); and, to a great extent, was the founder of Greek philosophy. The original and thinking men gathered around him, and he gave to them that impulse, which led the Cynics to say, that virtue was the highest and only object at which men

ought to aim ; which produced among the Cyrenaics the conviction, that the highest happiness was to be found in the active pursuit of that which was pleasing ; which the Megarians embodied in their dogma, that the supreme God was ever the same, and unchangeable ; and which the Ethical system of Plato puts forth as the four elements of virtue, wisdom, fortitude, temperance, and righteousness. (*φρόνησις, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη.*)

He endeavoured to undress the world, was always aiming at the first elements, in order to discover the real principles of science, and to show the unity of all true knowledge. Giving, however, as all-right minded men will, due praise to Socrates, he must never be taken as a moral example. Eminent as he and the Greeks were for intellect, it is not to the Greek that we must look for morality, or for light in reference to the future.

It has been well said, "if the death of Socrates was the death of a man, the death of Christ was the death of a God." We may add, if the life of one shone as a star, the other still shines as a sun.

See Socrates laughing and drinking ; the

blessed Jesus is weeping and fasting. See the one, mocking and scorning ; the other, when He is reviled, reviles not again ; and when He suffers, threatens not. Socrates joins the tyrants of his country, and puts to death his opponent and fellow-citizen, Leon : Jesus prays even for His murderers. Socrates insults the judges : Jesus is led as a lamb to the slaughter ; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.

Look at Him, not as God over all, blessed for ever, but as the man Christ Jesus, one just like ourselves. By birth, a carpenter ; in station, poor ; in childhood, uninstructed ; in manhood, persecuted. No one taught Him eloquence, yet He spake as did no other man. He did not gather wisdom from the lips of philosophers, and yet, when a child, He confounded the doctors. He so understood logic, that the most subtle reasoners among the Scribes and Pharisees were defeated by Him. The rich went to Him by night, the poor by day. He taught in the fields, the highways, the cities, the temple, and in the houses of all that received Him. He taught man that God was not only a Master, but a Father ; that the earth

was a training place for a brighter sphere, and this life the commencement of an endless existence ; that love to God and man was the true principle of action ; entire and unreserved submission to the Divine will, true wisdom ; humility, the path of greatness ; forgiveness of injuries, the noblest revenge ; and patient meekness under suffering, in insult, and amidst provocation, true heroism. His maxims were contrary to all that the world had ever taught ; His morality, purer than any it had yet imagined ; His truths, more sublime than any it had ever conceived. He was the greatest of all men, and yet as the least. The poorest had free access to Him, the miserable were helped, the sinful reclaimed, and all, whose eyes were opened to what true greatness really was, glorified God in Him.

This man was crucified with thieves, and His followers were persecuted ; now, He is hailed as the Deliverer of the human race, as Light from on high, and as the Great Power of God. Look to Him for the true science of life, for philosophy that immortalises, for courage that dares, for love that endures, and for humility that adorns. Seek the mind that was in Him. To

Him bow the knee, to Him confess with your
tongue, and then God shall highly exalt you,
and give you a name in heaven.

“Hail! Son of God, Saviour of men, thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my heart thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin!”

Milton.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TERRIBLE KINGDOM.

Four Beasts—Rome Primitive and Degenerate—Heathenism in the Small States—In the Empire.

THERE was in Babylon a house, with a chamber and windows toward Jerusalem. A prophet is sleeping in that chamber, and has a dream with visions : this is a description of them, in his own words.

“ Behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea : and four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagles’ wings : I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it : and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which

had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl ; the beast had also four heads ; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly ; and it had great iron teeth : it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it : and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it." (Dan. vii. 2—7.)

The four winds striving upon the sea, represent the wars and tumults that rage in the world, and out of which empires rise. The Lion is a figure of the Babylonian empire. The Bear, as already shewn, is the Medo-Persian. The Leopard is the Grecian. The Beast, dreadful and terrible, is the Roman ; and it endures till the Ancient of Days sits upon his fiery wheeled flaming throne ; and the dominion, and glory, and kingdom, are given to the Son of Man.

The old heathens all said that Rome was to be everlasting. It was founded, probably, in the year 753 B.C.

Rome was remarkable, at first, as a place of refuge for violent and disorderly men : and

yet Rome was wise in counsel ; constant in purpose ; diligent, brave, and persevering in every enterprise. Religion was mixed up with all that the people did ; and sages and heroes, who had largely benefitted mankind, were exalted and revered with adoration. The people claimed liberty as their right, and maintained it by their valour. They were rich in poverty ; for they did not so much desire wealth as honour ; and chose conquest rather than spoil. The early kings commanded the armies, called the assemblies, maintained the laws, and executed the public decrees. They were rather the chief and honoured ministers of the people, than sovereigns of the nation. Their love of liberty, and simplicity of manners, were still further increased when Servius Tullius strove to establish a republic. Tarquinius Superbus undid, for a time, all the good that Servius Tullius had done for the common people ; but becoming hated because of his oppression and cruelty ; and his eldest son, Sextus, having grossly abused the chastity of Lucretia, the wife of Collatinus ; Brutus marched to Rome, the proud and tyrannical king was banished, and the republic established in the year 510 B.C.

The unrighteous man being expelled, the city rejoiced.

Then we have Horatius Cocles defending the bridge, (Pons Sublicius,) against the Etrurians. He stands alone, the hinder part is broken down, and when he sees that his countrymen have all escaped, he casts himself boldly into the Tiber, and swims across amidst the darts of the enemy. This man by his valour delivered the city, and yet wisdom is better than strength.

Afterwards we behold the noble matrons of Rome, headed by Veturia and Volumentia, the mother and wife of Coriolanus, weeping in his tent; and praying that Rome may be spared. Coriolanus looks upon his little children, holding the hands of their mother; at his wife in tears, and his mother lamenting; his firm resolution bows, and, with a flood of tears, he grants their request: giving freedom to Rome, and taking far away the Volscian army. Love is mighty; and, like the Greek fire, many waters cannot quench it.

Then we see Curius and Fabricius take their food from earthen vessels, while they conquer the rich and mighty Pyrrhus; Re-

gulus desire to lay down the command of the armies, that he may cultivate his farm; and Æmilius Paulus, who fills the public treasury with Macedonian spoils, live frugally, and die poor. The people, with simple faith, fear, gratitude, or curiosity, obey dreams and omens; while they worship the deities of groves, streams, and hills, and the visible powers of nature.

Take another view of this people, and behold them in adversity.

It is the year B.C. 382.

A Roman army of forty thousand men is on the banks of the Allia. That small river flows in front of the armed host, whose left wing rests upon the Tiber, and stands upon the level plain; while the right is placed upon higher and broken ground. A Gallic army, under Brennus, is on the other side of the Allia. With a sudden onslaught the Gauls seize the higher ground, cast down its defenders, and then, with a mighty cavalry attack, turn the panic into a defeat, and the defeat into a rout. Flight does not save the vanquished, they fall under the swords of their enemies, are pierced

with their spears, and perish in the waters of the Tiber.

The road is now open to Rome, but Brennus cannot, as yet, make use of the victory. His troops spread themselves over the whole land, from the Allia to the city; here, is a crowd plundering; and there, those fierce warriors drown every sense of shame in drunkenness. In all parts are abominations committed, fearful to think of, and impossible to describe.

At Rome fear prevails, defence is impracticable, the whole city is given up, the enemy plunder and burn it. We cannot think that the legend is true which speaks of all the old people giving themselves devotedly to death; it is more natural to believe that most of them escaped; but we may look upon a scene which, though not improbable, fills us with wonder.

The Gauls entered at the Porta Collina, and all was silent as the grave. The dread which would steal upon a man, who found himself in broad daylight in the midst of a mighty city wherein not a living being was to be seen, came over that barbarian host. They found every house closed, every street silent, and as they marched on, with bewildered and anxious gaze, that

stilly deadness, which seemed to be the forerunner of eternal desolation, crept into their heart; and every man felt as if he stood alone where the tumultuous host of the living had at once been smitten by a fell stroke from God. They reached, at length, the Forum, and there, on the place of assembly for the people, beheld the ancient patricians, and many of the priests, clothed in robes of dignity, and seated on chairs of state. Doubtful whether the gods had come to defend and save the city, for those ancient men looked like beings of another world, an amazed Gaul drew near to M. Papirius, and with curious hand touched the beard of the venerable sage. The indignant Roman smote the barbarian scornfully with his ivory sceptre. The Gaul, in return, hewed him down; and then, fierce anger overcoming superstitious fear, those aged men were slain, every one in his place. The burning city was their mighty funeral pile.

“So they died, the gallant-hearted!
So from earth their spirits past;
Speaking words of lofty comfort,
Each to each, unto the last.”

Why is such an empire, adorned with so

many men of a noble character, represented in Scripture as a beast dreadful and terrible?

The Emperors, at least some of them, were guilty of wickedness of the most revolting character. Liberty degenerated into licentiousness; splendour, luxury, and ambition, sat in the seats formerly occupied by simplicity, temperance, and humility; strength was abused in order to oppress; and wealth turned aside to bribery. That which was good became bad, and the bad became still worse. Their religion, that old form which was tolerable, being better than nothing, degenerated into superstition, cruelty, and lust. At first it probably embodied, though with many faults, the traditions of past, and well-nigh forgotten, but real events. At last it became the doctrine of devils, the sewer into which ran all uncleanness. With might the nations were oppressed, and stamped down; with cruelty they were tortured and slain; so that a beast, dreadful and terrible, devouring and breaking in pieces, was a fit emblem of the Roman Empire.

That Empire was the embodiment of Heathenism, and the Pantheon was the meeting

place for every idol. The good that we love, and the noble whom we admire, existed in despite of the idolatry; and are the lights which God left in a dark world, as a token that He had not altogether gone from it. When we look at the patricians slain by the Gallic army under Brennus, we see the noble and venerable cast down by the rude hand of violence and licentiousness. On the one side is a picture of what a false religion can do: enable men to submit to fate with indifference, and to endure death without shrinking, when life seems to be the greater evil. At first we admire, and feel that there was something noble in the fortitude of those old Romans; but afterwards, we turn from them: for, instead of finding their hearts warmed with fervent love and joyful hope, we discover that all true and living feelings have been frozen; and when we would embrace them as living men, alas! they are marble statues, and unable to return our love. On the other side, the Gauls are fearful images of superstition and cruelty, animated by the wildest passions, and only restrained by terror. They carry fire in one hand and a sword in the other, are the

emblems of men's lusts, which Heathenism has no power to bind, every band being burned by the fire of passion, or cut by the sword of evil deeds.

..... "Men of fierce faces, threatening wars,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise,
To a city strong lay siege, assaulting,
With dart and javelin, grey-headed men and grave.
..... O ! what are these ?
Death's ministers ! not men, who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men."

Let us now contemplate Heathenism under the form of an allegory, and in the most favourable circumstances.

Choose a beautiful plain. Let Liberty and Equality come from heaven, dwell in that plain, and raise up children. Let Wisdom descend, that the little ones may sit at her feet while she unfolds the secrets of human nature, fills their hearts with love to one another, and opens the depths of state policy. Behold those fair beings, Liberty, Equality, and Wisdom, take the children whom they have reared, and, leading them by the hand, found in many places equal and happy governments. The magistrate enters every house,

that his eye may see, and his hand chastise, for the smallest crimes. The rod of justice is placed on high, and surrounded with terrible threatenings, that notable transgressors may be afraid. Poverty, in union with Innocence, peaceably nourish and bring up their daughter, Frugality; who, by the help of Wisdom, keeps out Extravagance. Liberty crowns every head with honour, fills every hand with plenty, and makes all the men brave.

We are apt to imagine that amid such circumstances, laying aside the figure, and in such wise institutions, are found the splendid actions of the ancient heathen: and as we look at them, we begin to think, that the united wisdom and goodness of a people may cover the folly and wickedness of Adam, and bring back again the blessings which were lost in paradise. It seems natural to expect that the experience of many will correct the inexperience of one, and lead the people once more to innocence and heavenly-mindedness. Vain thought! Folly and sin are found in the heart of every man, and no multiplication or union of individuals who are

foolish and sinful, will ever form a nation that is perfectly holy and wise. What the first man lost by himself, can never be won back by all men together.

Those small communities are as theatres with many scenes. Men and women are the players, and while they act, unclean things go forth from every heart, like the frogs that come out of the mouth of the dragon. (Rev. xvi. 13.) Wisdom cannot control these foul spirits, they are the desires of the flesh and the mind; with fraud and violence they rifle innocence, and licentiously abuse liberty. Innocence, thus insulted, escapes from the city, cabal and intrigue enter, wisdom is laughed at, and liberty trampled under foot.

The result seems more satisfactory when Roman power, having borne down every enemy, has united all the states under one rule.

We may embody the Republic under the form of a mighty warrior, with helmet, cuirass, shield, and sword, whose heart is filled with ambition. He takes in hand a vast globe, and holding it up, says: "I will conquer the world." He cuts off, and de-

stroys nations, not a few. The discipline and valour of his bands pave a way into the most distant countries; and fame, with the voice of a trumpet, fills every city with the news of fresh conquests; at length the world, so far as cared for, is overcome. Weary of battle and satiated with victory, the soldier seats himself upon a throne, will wage war no more, casts aside his sword, takes up the sceptre, and the Republic becomes an Empire. Nations now come nearer to one another in thought and feeling. The ends of the earth, a mighty spectacle, throw down their weapons, clothe themselves with the garments of peace, and take delight in the embraces of mutual love. The chains of bondage are hidden with garments of silk and velvet, and poets say, in the reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, "the golden age has come."

This scene passes away, like the beautiful colours of the rainbow; and while we look, lo, another is spread before us.

Peace appears, she scatters flowers; prosperity follows, and brings plenty. Plenty barters away her freedom, being beguiled

by luxury to become the hand-maid of vice, who then delivers mankind into the power of despotism. He sits upon the Imperial throne, disgraces and outrages human nature, and with ruthless hands, and the power of unlimited empire, strives to root up every virtue. The people bow down to gods who are infamous for every vice. Religious worship is a scene of the most odious and shameful acts. The more a man serves the gods, the worse he is made. The more he worships, the viler he becomes. Domestic corruption builds up an altar on which is sacrificed every private virtue. Marriage does not restrain, but gives force to sinful desire ; and with the mantle of law covers, but not conceals, licentious abandonment. The poor are not free men, but slaves ; and labour not as a duty, but by constraint ; not for reward, but under the exactions of rigour. They are sold like cattle. Their persons and goods, wives and children, are the property of their masters. The whole world groans and travails together, a mighty cry goes up to heaven from all nations. Man's wisdom and strength have been tried under all circumstances ; but cannot bring salvation,

nor cover the earth with beauty, nor make it
the dwelling-place of righteousness.

“ Tell me, my secret soul,
Oh, tell me, Hope and Faith,
Is there no resting-place
From sorrow, sin, and death ?
Is there no happy spot
Where mortals may be bless'd,
Where grief may find a balm,
And weariness a rest ?

Faith, Hope, and Love, best boons to mortals given,
Waved their bright wings, and answered, ‘ Yes, in
Heaven ! ’ ”

Aye ! and not in heaven only, but under the
wings of Him who said :

“ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy
laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon
you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart :
and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is
easy, and my burden is light.”—(MATT. xi. 28—30.
Ps. ix. 9. xci. 1—16.)

CHAPTER VIII.

TRIUMPHS OF THE CROSS.

The way prepared—Early converts—Cyprian—The Goths under Alaric—Ambrose—Theodosius.

THE Romans, the most warlike people in the world, were instruments in the Divine hand for working a mighty change. The highway upon which the soldiers trod became a path for missionaries, and above the royal seat at Rome was reared the throne of Christ. Alexander the Great had made one language bear the sway, and into that the Scriptures had been translated. Rome made one people bear the rule, and then, at length, one faith prevailed. When had there been a better time for teaching men that God had made of one blood all nations? When, before, could they have been made to know so easily, that God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness? This was the fulness and ripeness of time, and God sent forth His Son, as the One Mediator between Himself

and men, the man Christ Jesus : and the Son of God came to redeem the world.

The immediate result of this, and of the Divine Spirit's work, who had come down to dwell in the heart of man, was seen in the holy lives of primitive Christians. Under the most despotic government, and in the most dissolute age, these men were examples of every virtue. When all human foundations had been overthrown, the foundation of God stood sure ; and in the Gospel were found not only rules for guidance, but strength for the practice of every thing that was pure and lovely. The lips of enemies were compelled to praise, and the mind of the caviller was forced to respect a religion, whose spirit was that of gentleness, whose garments were those of purity, and whose every word was full of mercy : a religion that gained new vigour from opposition, and, rising up silently from obscurity, unfurled her banner to the nations, and reared the Cross upon the ruins of the Capitol.

Look at the zeal of an early Christian convert.

Every art and all the trades were concerned in the keeping up of idolatry. In the remains

of antiquity which have come down to us, we see not only figures of the gods, and the instruments of their worship; but that all the legends and fictions were used for the adornment of the house, the dress, and furniture of the pagans. The common language, both of Greece and Rome, was full of idolatrous expressions; and very often the coins had impressions of the same nature; so that business and pleasure, public and private life, peace and war, the popular spectacles and peculiar festivals, were full of snares for the Christian. As a magistrate, senator, soldier, or citizen, he was beset with peril. When the bride was led to her home, or the dead were carried to the funeral pile; when, on joyous days, the people adorned their doors with lamps and branches of laurel, and their heads with garlands of flowers; the Christian had to leave the bride, forsake the dead, and refuse to be joyous: for all these things were mingled with the worship of demons. Though thus surrounded with danger, he was brave; exposed to peril, he was constant; tried and tempted, he was found faithful. It was not enough to turn away from sin, he protested against it; and at the risk of life and fortune, in

sight of a prison, within view of lions ready to devour him, and while hearing the cries of those who were perishing on the rack, the Christian boldly declared the doom of the ungodly. "You are now glad, but wait for the greatest of all spectacles, the world's last and eternal judgment. Then many proud monarchs and fancied gods will groan in depths of darkness. Magistrates, who persecuted the Lord, will be dissolved in fiercer fires than those they kindled for Christians. Philosophers will blush in red-hot flames; poets tremble before the judgment seat of Christ; actors take not a false, but real part in suffering; and dancers leap but not for joy."* In the spirit of these words he reasoned of judgment to come.

Look at the Christian's future hopes.

The Cæsars, and mighty men, Cicero who charmed with his eloquence, the ablest orators who reasoned at the bar, and in the senate of Rome; feared not to make it known, that their lives were not regulated by any dread or hope of a future state. They refused the fictions of the poets, smiled at the dreams of philoso-

* Tertullian, *de spectaculis*.

phers, and, while laying claim to understanding, confounded themselves with the beasts of the field, worked with the horse, and died as the ass. That they lived, and that they should die, this was all that the heathen could grasp with certainty. They had nothing that told them of the existence, or pointed out the condition of that country which was to receive the souls of men. Christians, on the contrary, had a Divine revelation. They looked forward to happiness of so pure and refined a nature, as to satisfy the most exalted intellect. A heavenly Eden, with all the delights of the purely pastoral state, and adornments of primitive innocence, revived the hopes of the weary. A city, the New Jerusalem, with streets of gold, gates of pearl, and foundations of precious stones ; with banquets, songs of praise, and garlands ; was full of consolatory thoughts for those who were oppressed and made poor by the cruel hand of pride and superstition.

Look at their works of love.

These were so many and great, that the heathen said, "See how these Christians love !" They supported not only their own,

but the heathen poor. Great numbers of infants, inhumanly deserted by their pagan parents, were rescued from death, baptized, nourished, and educated by the piety of Christians. At Carthage, when the barbarians of the desert had carried away the brethren of Numidia, nearly a thousand pounds were collected to redeem them from bondage.* Widows and orphans, the aged, the lame, and the sick, blessed God: for the sick were visited, the prisoners set free, the widow and the fatherless comforted.

No wonder that men who lived such lives of love, were able to lay them down in faith. Take the following simple narration as a touching example.

When Cyprian was bishop of Carthage, Galerius Maximus, proconsul of Africa, was ordered to put the Christian teachers to death.

The Bishop is sitting in his house, he knows that he shall be one of the first victims, and secretly escapes. Soon regaining courage, he goes back to his dwelling, and patiently waits for the messengers of death. The officers, who apprehend him, lead him first to a private

* Cyprian, Epistol, 62.

house ; and there his friends gather around in sorrow, while the street is filled with an anxious multitude, who bewail his approaching fate. In the morning he stands before the proconsul's tribunal, is directed to offer sacrifice, and warned not to disobey. He firmly refuses, has no doubt or fear, and is ready to die in his Master's cause. The proconsul consults with his council, they all know of Cyprian's holy life, but the Emperor's command must be obeyed ; and the magistrate reluctantly orders, that Thascius Cyprianus be beheaded as an enemy of the Roman gods, and of the emperors, Valerian and Gallienus. No crime is laid against this good man, beyond that of courageously holding to, and confessing his faith in Christ. The Christians around cry out, " We will die with him." The officers take him, followed by the weeping multitude, to the place of execution, a wide and level plain near the city. He is stripped of his upper garment ; linen is spread on the ground by the people to catch his precious blood ; he directs his friends to give twenty-five gold pieces to the executioner as a proof of his forgiveness ; bends his head and covers his

face with his hands : with one blow his head is cut off from the body. Men look for hours upon the corpse, and in the night it is taken away for burial.—He chose to die a martyr, rather than live an apostate. He contended earnestly for the faith, and resisted unto blood.

“ When the fight of grace is fought,
When the marriage vest is wrought,
When faith hath chased cold doubt away,
And hope but sickens at delay,
When charity imprisoned here,
Longs for a more extended sphere,
Doff off thy robes of sin and clay,
Christian ! rise, and come away !”

Bishop Sandford.

No wonder that such zeal, the bright hopes of heaven, a life of love, and death of glory, made Christians conquer. Rome, with valour and formidable arms, mighty emperors, skilled generals, and trained legions, had overcome the world ; to be overcome, in turn, by men whose only weapon was the olive branch, and only shield a breastplate of righteousness. Rome was glad to be thus overcome. Thousands, and tens of thousands, laid their sins in humble confession and faith upon Christ :

crucified the flesh upon His cross : were brought by the Holy Spirit out of the deep grave of their corrupt nature : rose up in holy affections to heaven, and are now present with Jesus their Lord.

Rome was not the only empire, and Romans were not the only people, thus overcome by the Gospel : for it is the power of God unto all the world, and the means by which the universal sovereignty of the Lord Jesus will be established. Take, for illustration, a fact from the Gothic annals ; and, though Christianity had been received among the Goths in the impure form of Arianism, it will be found mighty.

In the year A.D. 410, on the twenty-fourth day of August, Alaric, descended from the noble race of the Balti, one of the most renowned among the Goths, stands with a mighty army before Rome.

The trembling Senate are hopeless of relief, and yet prepare by a desperate resistance to turn aside the flood of ruin. It is in vain : a secret conspiracy has been formed, in the silent hour of midnight the Salarian gate is stealthily

opened, and the wretched people are rudely aroused by the terrible sound of the Gothic trumpet. The licentious fury of German and Scythian tribes has free course. Forty thousand slaves avenge their stripes and bonds in cruel deeds upon their former masters. Great is the slaughter, wild the confusion, and fearful are the scenes of violence. All the terrors that could be expected from one, who had before said, in reply to their despairing threats of defence to the last, "the thicker the hay the easier it is cut;" all the severity that could be looked for from one who was justly provoked, and who, ere this, had declared that their lives only should be left; they experience. Brutal soldiers satisfy every sensual desire, and for six days the streets are filled with dead bodies. Wherever despair is converted into fury, and raises up the hands of the citizens in defence, the feeble and the innocent, women and children, are pitilessly slain.

The palaces are stripped of their costly furniture, and the cottage is not unplundered. Visible splendour is a proof of wealth, and the squalor of poverty a token of the miser's hoard. Blows, scourgings, and cruel torments,

are fatal to many unhappy wretches who cannot, or will not reveal their reputed treasures. Jewels and gold, greedily sought after; splendid and costly furniture, heaped upon the waggon; massy plate, wrapped in garments of purple, with silk and velvet; and exquisite works of art, noble vases, some shattered to fragments by the battle-axe in dividing the spoil; are the luxurious reward of Gothic valour.

It is refreshing to find among those savage bands, some of whom had scarcely heard the name of Christ, many instances of Christian feeling. Buildings dedicated to religion, were generally spared; and the Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul counted sacred asylums. Thus the Gospel, like the words of Christ upon the sea, quelled the wildest tumults of rage; deprived war of many horrors; and rescued from the grave those that were appointed to die. Christian Goths displayed piety and moderation, nor did they forget, even amidst nocturnal battles, that it was against Rome they fought, and not against Christ.

Take a simple sketch from the ancient writers.

The soldiers are roaming in search of prey. A powerful Goth forces open the door of the lowly abode of an aged virgin, whose life has long been dedicated to God. He demands determinedly, yet civilly, all the gold and silver that she has ; and is led at once to a beautiful array of massy plate, formed by the most skilful workmanship out of the richest materials. He gazes with delight at the unlooked-for spoil, but when about to take possession, hears this solemn warning : " These are sacred vessels consecrated to the service of the Church of St. Peter ; if you take them, your conscience will never forget the sacrilegious deed." The Gothic captain, smitten with awe, throws aside the love of gain ; and looking reverently upon the holy store, sends a message to the king that a sacred treasure has been discovered. Alaric commands that it be taken without delay to St. Peter's Church. A military procession is formed, and a numerous band of Goths stand in battle array, with glittering arms, around their companions, who, devoutly carrying aloft the sacred vessels of gold and silver, march with slow and solemn step, and hymns of praise, to the Church of the Apostle. Crowds

of Christians hasten to join, and a multitude of fugitives, we are told, gladly use this opportunity of taking refuge in that hospitable and safe asylum.

It was the Gospel which thus threw a shield over the vanquished : took the shout from the victor, and gave him a song of praise ; raised the fallen, and bound up their wounds. This is not the whole of the triumph, there remains a mightier victory : for in the embraces of brotherhood which shall be brought about, the fervency of prayer, and joyfulness of hope ; war will be unlearned, swords turned into ploughshares, and spears into pruninghooks : for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea ; all classes and conditions of men will be brought to the feet of Christ, and the clergy not be His only ministers, but kings and princes do Him honour. (Hab. ii. 14.)

Consider the character of a great and good man of the fourth century, and the influence which he acquired over the mind of a mighty king.

Ambrose, the Archbishop of Milan, is rich ;

but, for Christ's sake, gives up his wealth. In times of trouble, when other means fail, he sells even the plate of his Church in order to ransom Christian captives from slavery.

Valentinian the Second, when young, determines to establish Arianism. Ambrose is entreated to comply with the will of his sovereign. He replies, with respect and humility, "My fortune and life are in the hand of the Emperor, but I will never betray the cause of Christ. I am willing to die in the presence of my flock, but not to disgrace my Christian character." Sentence of banishment is passed upon him, and he is ordered to leave the city. Seeing that the true doctrine is in danger, that an Arian is about to be appointed over the Church, he, at the peril of his life, refuses to obey. Readily will he suffer all that the malice of wicked men can inflict, but he will not leave his faithful people.

Look at him now in another light. He sways the powerful mind of a wise and mighty king, and leads one, whose ruling sin is anger, to adorn himself with meekness and humility.

The reign of Theodosius (A.D. 370—395) was generally that of a wise and merciful prince,

and yet it was polluted with a deed of cruelty which would stain the annals of Nero.

The people of a rich and great city, Thessalonica, (A.D. 390,) raise an insurrection in which they barbarously murder Botheric, one of the Generals, and several chief officers of the Emperor. They deserve great punishment for this, but Theodosius, instead of letting the law take its course, treacherously invites the people to the games of the circus, and a great multitude attend. The soldiers then begin a massacre which lasts for three hours; neither age nor sex, neither the innocent nor the guilty, are spared; seven, and some say fifteen, thousand persons are slain. A merchant, who is quite innocent of the insurrection, offers his own life and all his wealth, if only one of his two sons may be spared. While he delays a little in doubting tenderness, not knowing which to choose, for then the other will die, the inhuman soldiers plunge their daggers, at the same moment, into the bosoms of both the young men; and the father sees them perish.

Ambrose, being told of this massacre, is filled with horror; goes from the city in order to

avoid seeing the Emperor, and writes a letter in which he boldly states that such a sin demands not only private tears of penitence, but public confession ; and that he cannot allow him to receive the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ, with hands polluted with the blood of an innocent people. The Emperor, much grieved at this letter and by the smittings of his own conscience, goes, after bewailing the sad consequences of his fury, to worship in the Church. At the porch he is met by Ambrose, who declares that private confession does not atone for a public fault. The mighty Emperor of the Romans strips off his royal robes, and with mournful suppliant posture in the Church of Milan, sighing and weeping, humbly begs for the forgiveness of his fault.

Posterity has commended the firmness of Ambrose.

The lesson we ourselves learn is this : that if a mind like that of Theodosius, wielding the world's sceptre, and arresting the fall of an empire, could thus be bowed down, and humbled, by religion which was in a corrupt state ; how much more will religion in a pure state incline the heart, move the will, and

direct the life of men. Theodosius in the great Church at Milan, confessing his sin; may be looked upon as an emblem of the kings of the earth bewailing their iniquity, and yielding themselves in subjection to Christ the Lord.

Lord! bless all cities, bless all lands,
O! may they yield to Thy commands;
And all men's hearts, set free from sin,
Glorious Monarch come within!

Thou art our Sun of Joy! O, bring
Light, healing, and eternal spring!
Make our world to bow before Thee,
And the nations all adore Thee.

Pure gold and incense bring ye kings,
Joyful praises let all men sing.

CHAPTER IX.

ENGLAND'S EARLY FAITH.

Christ alone supreme—The first English Martyr—Ancient and Modern Superstition—Saxons and Augustin—Vision of Laurentius—Edwin and Coifi—Aidan's character, teaching, and love of the Poor—Pious Oswald.

WHILE the Roman Empire stood, the nations of the earth lost their nationality, were united by animal attachments, and formed but one state, held together as by iron cramps. They were not, however, brought into spiritual order and unity; and the Empire, having done her mission by bringing men into subjection, was broken up in order that Christianity might be supreme.

Christianity requires no earthly supremacy like that claimed by ancient and modern Rome. Christianity gives nationality to countries, and individuality to men—commands every man to realise his own position in the world as a responsible being, and every nation to stand forth in all the peculiar characteristics with which it has been clothed by the Most High. She says not

to one, "sit thou here in the highest place," and to another, "sit thou there in the lowest room;" but speaks of men as brethren, and to nations as being of one blood. The relations of life all stand, rich and poor remain, honour must be given to whom honour is due, and the meeting place of all this, and the centre of unity, is Christ. As man, He is the brother of all men; as Saviour, He is the redeemer of all men; as Divine, He is the ruler of all men.

This supremacy Christ has not delegated; neither to angels nor to men. He did not ascend to heaven in order to lay aside His power, but to take the reins of government into His own hand. Any one, therefore, who presumes to say that the world's throne is vacant, and pretends to seat himself upon it, is like that evil spirit in the wilderness, who boastfully declared to our Lord — "all this power and glory have been given unto me." (Luke iv. 6.) True religion allows no man to come, either as barrier or mediator, between the sinner and God; for there is only one mediator, Christ Jesus: and Christianity, rightly understood, permits no prelate or spiritual potentate to place himself over kings, as their

head ; for Christ alone is King of kings, and Lord of lords. (1 Tim. ii. 5 ; Rev. xix. 16.)

Constantine was the first Emperor of Rome who proclaimed the sovereignty of Christ. England first hailed Constantine as Emperor A.D. 306 ; and Constantine was the first who made Christianity to be the religion of the Empire.

The provinces were not so much indebted to Rome for Christianity, (notwithstanding the statements of Roman Catholic writers,) as Rome was indebted to the provinces for uniting Christianity to the Imperial government. Some of them, like England, had already founded Churches.

Look, for a few moments, upon our early English Church.

Many ancient writers say, that the Apostle James, the brother of John, preached the Gospel in our islands ; but this cannot be true ; for about the year A.D. 44, Herod, the king, slew James, the brother of John, with the sword. (Acts xii. 2.)

Baronius and other Romish writers assert that St. Peter was our first missionary : but

they give no evidence in support of this improbable opinion. Peter was not the Apostle to the Gentiles, but to the Circumcision; and those who lay claim, in his name, for supremacy over the nations, ought, rather, to addict themselves to the propagation of Christianity amongst the Jews.

The common opinion that St. Paul preached in our land, deserves little credit. Clemens Romanus, Theodoret, and Jerome, are the chief writers who attest it. It is certain that Christianity came here very early; Tertullian and Eusebius both declare this. Pomponia Græcina, wife of Aulus Plautius, the first Roman governor of Britain, was a Christian; and Claudia, mentioned in 2 Tim. iv. 21, was probably a British lady. Our own historian, Bede, says, that in the year A.D. 156, Lucius, King of the Britons, sent a letter to the Christians at Rome, containing a request for instruction, and that this pious wish was gratified.* At the Council of Arles, A.D. 314,

* Eccles. Hist., book i., cap. iv. There is ground for believing this, notwithstanding the chronological and other difficulties.

three British Bishops were present ; and Pelagius, the noted heretic, who caused so much trouble, was a Welchman, and born at the end of the fourth century.

The white cliffs of England gleam but faintly in the far distant historic ages of antiquity ; and yet, even in that dim light, we discern the pure beams of the Sun of Righteousness. The rudely clad ancient inhabitants, in their frail boats braving the waves ; or, with spear and arrow, following the wild boar and the wolf through forest and marsh ; or hidden in fastnesses, and made secure by entangled thickets ; appear as spectral forms surrounded by dismal darkness—like the sailor, however, who, fondly looking for a glimpse of the land where stands his home, hails the sight with a shout of joy ; so our intent eyes gladly discover light breaking through the clouds, and sweet spots, beautifully bright and warm with the beams of the rising Sun. Let us linger in these places, and look at countenances adorned with the noblest qualities of the mind : Alban the Martyr, Laurentius the Archbishop, Edwin the King, Aidan the Missionary, and pious Oswald

Alban suffered martyrdom about the year A.D. 303.

"In Britain's Isle was holy Alban born."

He gave shelter, from motives of compassion, to a Christian who was fleeing from his persecutors. Seeing the Christian praying night and day, he was greatly impressed, began also to pray, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. His faith was soon tried, in order that he might be made like Him who ascended to heaven, lived poor and despised, and died a cruel death.

Alban is clothed with the ancient vest, called cota ; the lower garments, like trousers, are gathered round the ankles, but hang loose upon his limbs ; and over all is a thick mantle, buttoned upon the shoulders, and girded round the waist. The infatuated heathen people, with proud triumph, bitter sneer, and mocking scorn, hurry him to the Pagan judge ; who, being a priest, is clothed with a long white flowing robe, and, at this very moment, standing by the altar, offering sacrifice to idols. Alban is thus addressed : " You have concealed a rebellious despiser of the gods from the punishment due

to him. You shall die his death, if you forsake our religion."

Alban stands yet a moment speechless, while with closed eyes he communes with an unseen God, and then gently replies: "I am now a Christian, and bound by Christian duties."

"What is your name?"

"Alban, and I adore one true and living God, who made all things."

"You will be eternally happy if you offer sacrifices to our great gods."

"Your sacrifices," rejoins Alban, "are offered to devils, and those who worship devils will receive the everlasting pains of hell for a reward."

His speech, from being low and hesitating, becomes clear, bold, and impetuous. It breaks out with bursts of impassioned eloquence, rivetting the souls of the hearers, as they listen intently to the recital of a doom they dare not gainsay, and yet tremble like criminals to hear.

The judge, enraged, orders him to be scourged, believing that torture may shake the devout constancy of heart, which could not be moved by words. The skin is stripped

from his back, the blood flows, and strips of flesh fall down to the ground ; but he holds fast to his faith, and torments are in vain.

He is then led forth to execution. People of all ages and condition, as by divine impulse, attend the martyr. They follow the criminal, and leave the judge without attendants. The fire and rebuke of Alban's countenance are now abated, but not the earnest solemnity of his manner. Kindness and grief, with beseeching solicitude, strive for utterance ; while the crowd fix upon him the eyes of wonder and curiosity. He prays as one preparing to meet his God. The river, as he approaches, though generally a swollen stream, is dried. The amazed multitude declare that it is a miracle, wrought in order that he may arrive the more speedily at the place where he shall receive a crown of martyrdom. The executioner, refusing to perform his office, casts down the sword, and demands that he may die with Alban. Arrived at the top of the hill, where he is to be executed, a spring casts forth a refreshing stream, and the simple people wonder as he drinks of what seems a miraculous supply of water for his thirst. Thus refreshed, he looks round

with a radiant countenance, every feature beaming with holy joy, kneels in prayer, and then bows to the will of God. His head is cut off, and the soldier's also, who refused to give him the bloody stroke. The spectators are dumb with astonishment and fear, find neither utterance nor breath; every sound is hushed with mournful cadence, as the souls of the martyrs leave the world, and go up on high to the glorious God.

Alban suffered on the twenty-second day of June, near the City of Verulam; now called, in honour of the good man, St. Albans; it is in Hertfordshire. He was the first English martyr. We are glad to read, that moved by the constancy of the martyr, the judge ordered the persecution to cease, and began to honour those whom he had before despised.

In reading ancient history, and the legends of the martyrs, we find many marvels; yet when we make due allowance for error, and remember that the men of those days thought of God as a being always connected with, and caring for man, much of the marvellous will be explained. Men looked for

miracles as every-day events ; their frequency, we rightly think, is evidence against them. At the same time we must guard against our own errors. The early ages superstitiously called everything miraculous that was unusual ; this was the primitive tendency of the human mind. The superstition of our day takes another form, disconnects all things from God, rests upon intermediate causes, and tends very much to the idolatry of the heathen, who worships the spade with which he digs the ground. The road that leads to heaven, is straight and narrow, laid down by faith and confirmed by reason, and avoids both superstition and unbelief. Those who walk in it refer all things to God, as the God of order, who works regularly, without whom nothing is, or can be ; in whom they live and move and have their being.

Before proceeding to Laurentius, look at the Saxons, who began their invasion of our land, A.D. 449 or 450. They were Pagans, and yet, nevertheless, the ground of England's national strength. They came with their wives and children, as men determined to find a

home : they fought, and conquered. They had an honorable idea of women, and a high sense of the marriage tie. Their king was looked upon as a sacred person, descended from their god, Odin, the mighty warrior who would, they thought, at length, conquer the world.

In the year A.D. 597, Augustine, the monk, was sent by Gregory the Great to preach the Gospel to these Pagans. Ethelbert, the King of Kent, who had married a Christian wife, (Bertha, the only daughter of Caribert, the king of France, a descendant of Clovis,) was willing to receive instruction, and allowed him to dwell in the city of Canterbury. As Augustine and his companions, about forty men, entered the city, they sang : " O Lord, we beseech Thee, mercifully to turn away Thy wrath and anger from this place, and from Thy Church; for we have sinned." The king was baptized in the year five hundred and ninety-eight, and Christianity was generally embraced in Kent.

A.D. 604. Augustine appointed Mellitus to be Bishop of London, and Christianity was received in Essex; Justus was then placed as Bishop of Rochester, and Laurentius was named as the successor of Augustine.

A.D. 613. Twelve hundred monks of Bangor were slain by Ethelred, King of Northumberland, in consequence of their resistance to papal dominion. These are mentioned as a proof that there were many Christians, even then, among the British.

Ethelbert, of Kent, died in the year six hundred and sixteen. Eadbald his son restored idolatry. Justus and Mellitus left their sees and went to France, because the men of Essex had also relapsed. Laurentius was also thinking of leaving the country, and ordered his bed to be laid in the Church of St. Paul, London, that he might sleep there for the last time.

Look at him in that ancient Church. He prays to God, casts himself upon the earth, and cries aloud. Tears pour from his eyes; he is about to give up the whole land to idolatry—that idolatry which was again rising, like a foul hag gaunt and ferocious, with fangs and tusks, to destroy the bodies and souls of men. His conscience tells him that the flock, of which he is the overseer, will be devoured by wolves; that horrible superstition will soon redden the hands of deluded Britons, and turn their swarthy faces into countenances

livid with cruel rage; and yet he, the shepherd, is fleeing. Thus scourged in spirit, he falls asleep, and has a vision. Peter appears, (so says the legend,) severely stripes him, and, with fiery rebuke in his countenance, and eager earnestness mingled with benignity and grief, asks why he leaves the sheep? and who are the shepherds that will keep the little flock of believers? Then reminds him that he ought to be willing to suffer bonds, stripes, imprisonment, affliction, and even death, for Christ's sake. What if rivers of blood are to flow, and the dwellings of men to be levelled with the dust, it is for him to remember that he shall have peace at last, if he warns these perishing sinners to flee to Christ for refuge from the wrath to come.

Laurentius shewed himself on the following morning, as one scourged by the Apostle, to Eadbald, who was so impressed, that he forbade the departure of Laurentius, reformed his own conduct, received baptism, and from thenceforth lived a godly life.

In what light are we to look upon this vision of Laurentius, and the scourging by St. Peter? It was the custom for men to fast in those days,

and to scourge themselves. Laurentius had done so, and had scourged himself very much in the excess of his sorrow. During the night his fears and pains embodied themselves in a vision. He thought that he was really and divinely smitten, and what is so real as the reproof of God himself to man? When he looked at his body next morning, it was probably much more marked and bruised than he expected it would be from his own stripes; the vision then took still more hold upon his mind, and he presented himself to Eadbald as one whom God had scourged for the sins of the people.

If such an explanation as this be found to hold good, it will explain many stories of a like kind in Ecclesiastical History. Many of those about whom such things are recorded, must be looked upon as men of truth, who believed that all liars will have their place in the pit of ruin, and we dare not charge them with deliberate falsehood.

Soon after the conversion of Eadbald, the Angles in Northumberland received the Gospel.

Edwin, the greatest prince of the Heptarchy in that age, became King of Northumberland

about the year A.D. 625. He fell in battle against Cadwallar, King of the Britons, and Penda, King of Mercia, on the twelfth day of October, in the year six hundred and thirty-three. After his death, the Christians were again grievously oppressed, and slain; women and innocent children being put to barbarous deaths, and the country ravaged with savage cruelty. We cannot forbear to remark, in thinking of their sorrows, that if any man now be in heaviness through manifold temptations, and weary and faint in his mind, let him recollect the ancient trials, and that he has not yet resisted unto blood.

With regard to Edwin, a woman is once more honoured to be the means of salvation to a king, her husband, and to many of his subjects.

Look at the way in which he was led to accept Christianity.

He desires to wed Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert. Eadbald, her brother, sends this message:—"It is not lawful to marry a Christian to a Pagan." Edwin answers, "I will not act in opposition to the Christian faith. She and her attendants may worship after their own manner. I will embrace the same religion, if,

after being examined by wise men, it is found holy, and worthy of God."

The virgin is given to Edwin, and Paulinus, a godly bishop, goes with her as a spiritual guide. The faith of Christ, for about a year, makes but little progress; the god of this world blinds the minds of unbelievers, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine into them. At length, on Easter-day, a remarkable event happens.

The court is at the royal city, near the river Derwent.* A messenger, named Eumer, is announced from Cuichelme, King of Wessex. Being admitted, he draws near to the king, craftily pretends to deliver a message, and suddenly draws a two-edged poisoned dagger to stab him. Lilla, a beloved officer, having no other means of defence, interposes his own body to receive the stroke. The assassin strikes with so much force, that the dagger, after piercing the body of the knight, wounds the King. Before the blow can be repeated, the wretch is attacked on all sides, and slain by the attendants. The confusion is terrible.

* It is now a village called Alby, not many miles from York; the ruins of an ancient Castle are near.

On the same night, the Queen, greatly alarmed, gives birth to a daughter. Paulinus, who has been much in prayer for her, when Edwin gives thanks to the idols for the birth of a child, tells him that he had better thank Christ, both for deliverance from the assassin's knife, and for his wife's safety. The King is silent; he remembers the idol feasts, and what he has been taught of the wails of spirits in the hollow wind moaning through the forest; the awful cadence now seems to enter his ear; but he bethinks that those idols are worshipped by his enemy, and promises, that if victorious over that enemy, the King of Wessex, who had sent the assassin, he will renounce idolatry, and serve Christ.

He is victorious, and now, being a man of great sagacity, deeply reflects upon the truths of the Christian faith, often sitting alone for many hours.

A Council is summoned.

Hear the King's words: "What think you of the new worship that is preached? Is Christ the fountain of life? Can we be cleansed from sin through him?" Coifi, the chief of the idol priests, answers: "O king, let us look into this

new religion ; for, verily, the religion which we have hitherto professed has no virtue in it." Then a nobleman speaks—" the present life, O king, compared with the vast unknown, is like the swift flight of a bird through a warm and lighted room, while around is the dark and wintry storm. We know not what went before us, nor what is to follow ; though we have used desperate and appalling means to gain a glimpse of the future. Our forefathers tore the vitals of human victims, living and palpitating, from writhing bodies, (and what have we not done ?) in order to know whose blood should flow in the day of battle, and who would be victorious. And yet they knew nothing. If, therefore, this new doctrine tells us anything certain, it deserves to be received." Paulinus, after this, lays again simply before them the truths which he had preached : that the Lord, who came down from heaven to bring life and immortality to light, Himself died a death that terrified even savage minds ; which death was, nevertheless, a victory over every enemy of man ; and the means of giving to His disciples a key to open the dark portals of the grave, so that they might pass through

to a world of joy and glory. Coifi, in conclusion, adds: "I have long been aware that there was nothing in that which we worshipped; for the more I sought after truth, the less did I find: but the truths now brought to us by this preaching are pardon, life, and eternal happiness." The King then orders that the images, altars, and temples, shall be destroyed; and enquiring who will set an example in profaning the idolatrous emblems, Coifi answers: "I, for in my ignorance I worshipped as an example to others; now will I destroy them, in proof of the wisdom which has been given to me by the One True God." Then girding about him a sword, taking a spear, and mounting a horse, he rides to the nearest temple, profanes it by casting in his spear, and orders it to be destroyed.

The people look on amazed, while the fire rejoices over their idols.* At length they too are made glad in the faith of Christ, and many of them, with Edwin and his nobles, are baptized at York, in the Church of St. Peter, the twelfth day of April, in the year of our Lord six hundred and twenty-seven.

* This place of idols is in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and is now called Godmanham.

The peace and order of the land became so great under Edwin's wise and mighty rule, that even a timid woman, with her new-born babe, might travel across the country from sea to sea, and receive no harm. He placed brazen drinking vessels, and seats, for the convenience of travellers, at the clear springs near the highways. By such acts of kindness, and a godly walk, he made the people greatly love him; and when he died they greatly wept.

In reflecting upon the lives and characters of those early British kings, who yielded full obedience and faith to the precepts and truths which were taught them by the Missionaries of the Gospel, we are apt to pass lightly over their difficulties. We take it as a matter of course that we should have acted wisely, and condemn the Jews and ancient heathens for delaying a single moment the gladsome acceptance of the Faith. Are we not too hasty in judging? Do men now give up their idols of self-will and pleasure, and pride, and money, more readily than the heathens did their idols? On the contrary, do we not find that love and faith, hope and joy, are slain before our eyes day by day? And it may be,

that if our own special sins were rebuked, the credentials of miracles would rather be looked upon as Satan's handiwork, than the right eye be plucked out, and the right hand cut off. (Matt. xviii. 8, 9.) Good Lord, give us all grace that we may give up our idols, and cling alone to Thee! that, as in heaven so on earth, Thy will be done!

Look now at the beautiful, simple, and pure living and teaching of Aidan, the Scotch missionary.

He was sent by the Scots from one of the most romantic of the Scotch islands. The Latin name is Iona; the common name, I-colum-kill, the Isle of Colum of the Cells. It is about three miles long, and one mile broad; separated by a narrow channel from the west point of Ross. He laboured for about sixteen years, and died the thirty first day of August, A.D. 651, twelve days after the murder of Oswin by Oswy.

The minister who was sent first, in compliance with King Oswald's request, to Northumberland, met with no success, and returned, saying, "No good can be done to that people;

they are stubborn, uncivilized, and barbarous." Aidan replied, " Brother, I fear that you have been too severe with your unlearned hearers, and did not give them first the milk of the word, so that afterwards they might be led to, and strengthened in, the sublimer truths of our holy faith." The assembled brethren determined upon this, that Aidan should go.

He was made Bishop of Lindisfarne, by Oswald, A.D. 635. In travelling from one part to another, in order to preach the Gospel, he was wont to go on foot, that he might speak to the people by the way. He never made presents to the rich, but hospitably entertained them when they came to his house. He spent his money among the poor, and in ransoming those who had been sold for slaves. So full was he of meekness and piety, moderation and wisdom, that he entirely won Oswald's heart. Churches were built, ministers ordained, and the people joyfully flocked to hear the Word of God. It was delightful, at the beginning of Aidan's ministry, and before he well knew the language, to see the king zealously interpreting the meaning while Aidan preached.

Aidan's sense of man's sinfulness made him

despise pride and vainglory. His love of peace and charity subdued even turbulent spirits ; while his diligence in keeping and teaching the commandments of God rendered his life an example to all. With proper dignity, as the Lord's servant, he reprov'd the haughty and powerful ; with tenderness and love he comforted the sorrowing and helped the afflicted. He spoke plainly of the One mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, and taught boldly that the blood of Christ washed out man's sin ; and that as Christ had risen from the grave, and ascended to heaven, the faithful would rise from the tomb in the day of resurrection, and go up to God. His affection was so great for the poor and sorrowful who believed, that in the countenance of every one he saw the face of Jesus.

Take an illustration of this :—

Prince Oswin, who governed the provinces of Deiri, gave a very fine horse to the bishop, to be used in crossing rivers, and for urgent journeys. A Christian met Aidan, told him that he was in trouble, and asked for help. Aidan dismounted, and ordered that the horse, with all the royal trappings, should be given as a present

to the wretched man. The prince heard of this, and said : " Why give that royal horse, which you needed ? There are many horses of less value that would have done for him." The bishop answered, " O king, is that foal of a mare dearer to you than the Son of God ?"

He meant to say that nothing was too good for Christ ; giving the horse to that poor wretched man was a gift to the Lord, in the person of His afflicted child. This was a striking illustration of the manner in which poor believers were to be regarded ; and, given in an age when they were much oppressed and despised, is a proof of the great elevation of Aidan's mind above the spirit of the times. The prince was silent for a long time : at last, oppressed by a sense of the great truth which he had heard, fell before the bishop, saying, " From this time I will never speak of what you shall give to the sons of God." The bishop, in a little while, began also to be sad, and, weeping, said to one of his attendants, in a language not understood by the king, " I never saw so humble a king before ; he will soon, I fear, be snatched from us, for the nation is not worthy of him." The fear was soon realized ; for this

excellent prince was treacherously slain by Ethelwin, the commander of Oswy's forces. A monastery was afterwards erected upon the spot.

Oswald, who was the means of bringing Aidan into the country, was slain in battle, in the year 642, against that same Penda who slew Edwin. A proof of the unsearchableness of God's ways. Two kings, whose equals in piety and virtue can hardly be found in any age, lost their lives in conflict with the same barbarous and heathen foe. The Divine grace in them, and in Aidan, is more touching and beautiful than are all the miracles recorded of them, even were those miracles true. They were lights in a dark age, and show the power of the Gospel in refining the manners, purifying the morals, and enlightening the mind of man.

Oswald became powerful, and had larger dominions than any of his ancestors; but always remained humble, affable, and generous. He had a servant whose business it was to relieve the poor, and on one occasion, when a great number came, and provisions failed, the king sent the meat from his own table, to supply their wants. The spirit of prayer; moreover,

which he possessed in adversity, was his companion upon the throne. Take a last view of this noble prince :—

He is advancing against cruel Cadwalla, whom he defeats and slays. His army is small but valiant, and composed of Christians. They have arrived at Hallington, anciently called Havenfelth, a mile to the north beyond Bingfield. A bloody battle is about to be fought, and the soldiers will erect a trophy of their faith in the sight of the heathen. Themselves in danger of death, they will honour Him, through whose death they have a good hope of everlasting life. A cross is hastily made of such wood as can be quickly got, and a hole being made in the ground, it is placed therein. The king holds it up with both hands, while the earth is thrown around to make it firm. The soldiers shout mightily, and praise Christ the Lord. They eagerly call to be led against their barbarous foe ; but when the king says, " Let us pray," there is a deep, solemn silence. With a reverent spirit, the king kneels, and the soldiers kneel, to ask God for help in this their time of great distress. Oswald prays : " O, Thou true, living, and almighty God !

defend us, in Thy mercy, from our haughty and fierce enemy. Thou knowest that we have taken in hand this just war for the safety of our nation." The whole army rise up from prayer with a noble resolve to conquer or die. It is no light cause that they have undertaken ; they fight for truth and life ; and on the morrow, at early dawn, they march, attack the foe, and conquer.

" Oft in sorrow, oft in woe,
Onward, Christians, onward go ;
Fight the fight, maintain the strife,
Strengthened with the bread of life.

Let your drooping hearts be glad ;
March, in heavenly armour clad ;
Fight, nor think the battle long ;
Soon shall victory tune your song.

Let not sorrow dim your eye,
Soon shall every tear be dry ;
Let not fears your course impede,
Great your strength, if great your need.

Onward then in battle move ;
More than conquerors ye shall prove ;
Though opposed by many a foe,
Christian soldiers, onward go."

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST LIFTED UP IN FRANCE.

The Tree of Life—Clovis' conquests and marriage—
Clotilda's Faith—Battle of Tolbiacum—Ancient Legends
—Revivals.

IN this chapter and the following, will be shown the planting of the Tree of Life in France and Russia.

"The Tree of Life," is a phrase well known to every body, but very few connect with the words any other idea than that of a forest tree. Very often the ideas of Christians do not go beyond a faint conception, that by means of Christ's sufferings upon the cross salvation has been worked out for them; and the cross has thus become an object of superstitious reverence. This error may be corrected, by looking upon the great facts of Christ's redemption as a tree of life for believers to feed upon. If, however, this, or any other symbol, is found to draw down the mind to carnal things, instead of raising it to spiritual

objects, symbolism must be avoided ; but to a healthy mind the act of symbolising is delightful. It embodies thought, and deepens feeling ; by bringing confused and entangled notions into beautiful order : and by kindling the faint spark of human affection into the burning flame of spiritual love. Our Lord quickens this delightful faculty into exercise by calling Himself the door, the vine, the shepherd ; and by this means leads us from the natural to the spiritual, from the present to the future, from the temporal to the eternal.

Do the same with the great facts of the Gospel : the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ ; the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, and the proclamation of salvation to the ends of the earth ; blending, as before said, the natural with the spiritual, the present with the future, and the temporal with the eternal ; rising as with a mental ladder to heaven.

Let these facts be lovingly planted in the heart, and wisely rooted in the mind ; that they may grow into a spiritual tree ; and let the growth be in accordance with the times mentioned in Scripture. This tree must have a

noble stem, with two outstretched arms, as were our Lord's upon the cross. For three days, the time He lay in the grave, it seems dead, but at the end life is manifested. Forty days after, when He ascended to heaven, the mind, soaring with devotional feeling, beholds that the head of the tree is raised, and crowned with rays and clouds of light. Fifty days after, when the Holy Spirit descended, twelve noble branches, representing the Apostles, grow out on every side. The enraptured soul sees them move by a mysterious influence, shine with light, put forth leaves and fruit, bend down to the earth, and while the air is gently moved by the breathing of the Spirit, every leaf distils a heavenly dew, and all the fruit is filled with rich nectareous taste.

Now place this tree in the foreground of a mental picture, and surround it with the matron and the virgin, the aged in years and the young of days, the rich in company with the poor, and the ignorant bearing the train of the wise. Behold, they come boldly, yet with reverence; they pluck the leaves, and gather the fruit; it is the Tree of Life, and they sing: "Blessed are they that do the commandments

of Jesus, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may go through the gates into the city." (Rev. xxii. 14.)

Look at the planting of this tree in France, and the shewing forth of those precious truths which we have been striving to fix in the mind by means of a figure.

When the old Church of Sainte Genevieve, at Paris, was pulled down, May 10, 1807, two sarcophagi of stone were found with the remains of Clovis and his wife Clotilda.

Clovis was the son of Childeric, and grandson of Meroveus, who gave his name to the Merovingian dynasty among the Franks. He was born, A.D. 467, and died in the year 511. He began his career about A.D. 481, when his father Childeric died, as king of the Salians, one of the Frankish tribes seated at Tournay. It was under Clovis that the Franks took a commanding position among the nations; and he must be looked upon as the real founder of the French monarchy. The Empire of the West had fallen. Italy was under the rule of the Ostrogoths. The only relic of Roman rule was found in Gaul, in the possession of the patricians, Ægidius, and his son, Siagrius.

In the year four hundred and eighty-six, Clovis attacked Siagrius, near Soissons, defeated, made captive, and beheaded him. He then conquered the people of Tongres, and overcame all the other Frankish chiefs. Victory attended his banner, and the sword cut through the ranks of his enemies; his spear was invincible, the ground drank up the blood of the vanquished, and the name of Clovis was triumphantly shouted by victorious soldiers; the trumpet proclaimed that he ruled the land, and soon his mighty sway extended from the banks of the Lower Rhine to the Loire, the Rhone and the Ocean. After this, a large territory fell into his hands, including Bordeaux and Toulouse, stretching out, probably, to the foot of the Pyrenees.

Turn from the battle-field and its carnage. Instead of shouts and groans, the clang of arms, and the fire of wasted cities; melodious music breaks the silence, rising high, even up to heaven, and then—

“Hark, how it falls! and now it steals along,
Like distant bells upon the lake at eve,
When all is still.”

The light of a joyous festival cheers the eye.

There are fair maidens adorned with wreaths of flowers, and one fairer than all ; there are brave warriors in armour, and one braver than all, and in more bright array. The brave deserve the fair ; and Clovis, the warrior, leads the good and beautiful Clotilda to the marriage altar, in the year four hundred and ninety-three. The people are cheered with the hope of peace, and present their gifts, while the monarch spreads out a kingly feast. She, the daughter of Chilperic, king of the Burgundians, weeps. Clovis, the bridegroom, rejoices in his love for the damsel. The father is glad of an alliance with the brave Clovis ; and the daughter obeys her father's wish ; but it is as the union of the dove and the hawk, for she is a Christian, and he—a Pagan. God overrules all the fault, and all the sin ; and by means of that good and fair woman, brings Christianity to the great French nation.

She reasons with her husband.

“ There is only one God, who is good, wise, mighty, and true.”

“ God,” says the warrior, “ may be one ; and yet be honoured under different names, and by different rites.”

"He has made known the way in which He will be served, and has sent His Son to redeem us from sin."

"As for the Christian God, who was not able to keep the Roman empire from confusion and trouble, He does not deserve honour from a soldier;" replied the king.

Often does she thus plead with him. At length a son is born: the father's hope, and mother's joy. She, in all the fervour of a living faith, entreats that the boy may be baptized. Alas! the child dies soon after. "Where is your God?" says the king.

Another son is born, again is faith victorious, and the child baptized. Sickness has not forgotten to visit that house, and returns to smite the second boy. The king grimly prophesies its death. The godly mother watches lovingly over her son, and as a tender nurse is ever at his couch. She prays, prays earnestly: "Lord, spare my child! Take away this sickness! Do it, O God! for Thine own glory. Why should the heathen say, 'where is now thy God?' Lord! heal my child, and save my husband." This praying spirit is as a healing balm. It seems as if her

hand, lifted up to God, raises up the child's hand with strength—as if her breath, breathed forth to the Holy One, becomes the breath of life to the boy. His eye brightens, the sickness leaves him, and the mother says to the king, “My God has heard my prayer: the boy lives.”

This earnest zeal, and fervent piety, gradually made a deep impression upon her husband's mind; other events, also, helped on the change which was now being wrought.

The grave of Bishop Martin of Tours became renowned for the miracles said to be worked there. Lunatics, deaf, dumb, blind, and epileptic people, went thither to be healed. It was a sacred spot. His name spread through France to Italy and Spain, and men came from afar to that place in order to pray.

Clotilda said, and believed, after the manner of her time, that these miracles were proofs of the power possessed by the God of the Christians; and at length, Clovis was led, under the following circumstances, to make the public confession of faith which his wife desired.

In the year four hundred and ninety-six, two mighty armies are encamped at Tolbiacum, near to Cologne. The Alemanni have come up in great force, and Clovis, with an array of Franks, will do battle with them. The onset is furious ; the carnage, dreadful ; the struggle, desperate. Clovis calls in vain to his gods ; there is no answer. The crisis has arrived, it is against him, and defeat looks him in the face. Now he thinks of the Christian's God, and lifts up an earnest prayer for victory, promising that he will evermore honour Christ. The prospect of the battle changes. He is victorious. The joy of conquest fills his heart, gratitude is in his soul, the laurels of a conqueror are around his head, and he returns to his devoted prayerful wife. He is baptized the same year, with most of his soldiers, on Christmas day, 496, by Remigius, Archbishop of Rheims.

When told, while under instruction for baptism, of Christ's sufferings, he cried out in great anger against the Jews : " Had I been there with my Franks, would I not have scourged them ! "

Thousands, and tens of thousands of the

people were instructed, and baptized ; yet it was not for France, with her myriads of inhabitants, and many broad lands, to cause the knowledge of Christ to spread among the nations. This great work was left for two small islands, Great Britain and Ireland. They, calmly resting upon the bosom of the waters, were the nursing places of those godly men who went forth, both in olden and modern times, to enlighten the dark places of the earth, and to bring rude and barbarous nations to the civilization and loveliness of Gospel truth.

When we, in these days, reflect upon the ancient legends, which tell us of so many miracles ; as those, for example, at the grave of bishop Martin ; it seems hard to refuse assent, but harder still to yield belief. What must we do ? Those old men are not all liars. Will not Truth, herself, help us to find that which we ought to believe ? Certainly. Make due allowance both for deception and credulity, then much of the marvellous will be taken away. What remains is but little more than those providential answers to prayer which

God has given in every age to his faithful people. It should be understood that when the imagination is highly wrought upon, when the fervour of devotion has quickened up the faculties, an astonishing physical effect may be produced upon the body. Nervous diseases, and many others which do not seem to be at all connected with the mind, may in this manner, by the goodness of God, not only be partially relieved, but entirely cured. It is not needful, therefore, to deny all that is marvellous and apparently miraculous in ancient history. It is not necessary to charge all the men of those days with the double fault of craft on the one hand, and fond credulity on the other. Where there are no grounds for believing, and no proof to convince us, that a miracle has been wrought; we should seek for the true key to the mystery by research into the operations of the human mind upon the human body.

What are called, The ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, are experienced daily. The notorious profligate is converted; the proud man, made meek; the unclean, chaste; and the ungodly, led to walk in the beauty of holiness

These are notorious facts. The love of strong drink is taken away, evil desires are banished, and men wonder at the change. They do not commonly speak of it as miraculous; and yet it is wrought by that power which comes only from God; and is wonderful, even as those mighty operations which lift up nations and astonish the world.

Take a brief historic view of some of these marvels.

Many and various explanations have been given of the marvellous excitement in the year one thousand, as to the second coming of Christ. Men left their business, sold their lands, went to Palestine, died of terror, because they thought that the day of the Lord was at hand. The enthusiasm which precipitated the Western world against the Eastern, and made men, women, and children, mad for crusading, has received different solutions. The religious fervour which made the Reformation not only possible, but actual in our own and other lands; the modern awakings, excitements, and revivals in Germany, America, Ireland, and England, have all been accounted for in ways the most

contradictory. Few, comparatively, have been led to look upon these marvellous movements, and these deep workings of the spiritual faculties, as proofs of the existence of a spiritual power exercising a mighty influence upon the minds and bodies of men—a power separating man from all the lower animals, and linking his spirit to an inner world: to that which is good, by means of all that is noble and true; and to that which is evil, by all that is base and false: for it is of a two-fold nature.

The power working righteousness and peace, making men better husbands and fathers, improving the mind and enlarging the heart, comes from the kingdom of God. The power which tears and destroys, bringing in error, working confusion, and not in subjection to reason, though it cry about the most High God; and the way of salvation, is not from above; but of the same nature as that which Paul rebuked in the damsel of Philippi; is really the power of the devil. (Acts xvi. 16—18.) It is a fact, which every child of God is conscious of, that mighty powers wrestle against one another within the soul. When the enemy comes in like a flood, then the Spirit of the Lord lifts up

a banner ; and when gracious influence abounds, Satan, in a little, bestirs himself to the conflict. It is also a fact, and history confirms it, that every remarkable spiritual manifestation in past ages, has been attended, or followed, by a power which seemed to destroy, or, at least, weaken the results. In the New Testament we find Jesus and evil spirits in marvellous conflict. The persecutions of Rome Pagan against Christianity, and Rome Papal against Evangelical Christians, threatened to put out the light of true religion. The noble, self-denying spirit of the Puritan age was soon carried to extravagance, and finally quenched in the licentiousness of Charles the Second's time. The earnestness of the Scotch Reformers, was disfigured by the stern relentless bigotry of the Fanatics. He who has carefully read history, will remember for himself abundant illustrations.

What will the end be ?

As the work of grace, when truly begun in the soul, is not left until perfected ; this spiritual awaking and reviving in the midst of the nations, though sometimes lulled and dishonoured, will never cease ; but issue in that

glorious pouring out of the Spirit, which shall fill the world with light. (Habakkuk ii. 13, 14.)

“ Open our eyes, Thou Sun of life and gladness,
That we may see that glorious world of Thine ;
It shines for us in vain, while drooping sadness
Enfolds us here like mist ; come, Power benign,
Touch our chilled hearts with vernal smile,
Our wintry course do Thou beguile,
Nor by the way-side ruins let us mourn,
Who have the eternal towers for our appointed bourn.”

Christian Year.

CHAPTER XI.

CONVERSION OF RUSSIA.

Ancient Russia—Oleg, his death—Jaropolk assassinated—Vladimir the Great—Zeal for Idolatry—Father and Son martyred—Defenders of Heathenism—Mohammedans, Jews, and Wise Greek—Ten Messengers—Vladimir becomes a Christian—The People Baptized.

THERE are but few glimpses in ancient history of the Scythian and Sclavonian tribes who roamed over the vast plains of Russia. Among many, and independent states, Kiew and Novgorod seem to have been the chief. About the year A.D. 850, Rurik, a Varagian (probably Danish) freebooter of the Baltic, was chosen by the people to defend Novgorod. He founded a dynasty which ruled till the year one thousand five hundred and ninety-eight. At the death of Rurik, his sons were left under the guardianship of Oleg, who treacherously seized Kiew, and put the governor to death (883). Some time about the the year 904 he led a fleet of two thousand boats, carrying eighty thou-

sand men, from the mouth of the Dnieper to attack Czargorod (Constantinople). The fleet was scattered by a tempest. Another attack, in 941, by Igor, the son of Rurik, was defeated by means of the Greek fire, which burned the Russian flotilla. After this a more friendly spirit was manifested, and the widow of Igor embraced the Christian faith in Constantinople, (955,) and received the name of Helena. Her son, however, Swatoslas, obstinately clung to idolatry, invaded the Greek empire, and fell in the year nine hundred and seventy-three. Then his three sons reigned: Jaropolk, in Kiew; Oleg, near the Dnieper; and Vladimir, in Novgorod. The reign of this latter, called Saint Vladimir the Great, is the era of Russia's conversion. (980—1015.)

The divided Empire holds up a picture of horrid strife, and shews a brother dipping his hand in a brother's blood.

Oleg finds a young nobleman within the vast hunting grounds of his domain, and immediately slays him. (This, according to ancient barbarous customs, was sufficient ground for hatred and strife unto death.) Svanelde, the father of the slain young man, in order to be

revenged, stirs up Jaropolk to war against Oleg, and to take possession of his land.

The two brothers prepare for battle. Oleg gathers his army, and Jaropolk advances : they fight. Oleg flies, being defeated, towards the town Owrutsch. His warriors follow, closely pursued by the enemy. On the bridge, before the gate of the city, is a horrid tumult, and the men rush fiercely on. Terror and rage, as two furies from the bottomless pit, make them blind ; and Oleg, unknown, is thrust from the bridge, and, pressed down by the weight of many dead, finds a deep grave in the depths of the river. Jaropolk enters the city, and calls immediately for his brother. The dead body, dripping with blood, and stretched upon a piece of tapestry, is brought in, and laid before him. The conqueror forgets the victory, brotherly love takes the place of angry passions, his eyes overflow with tears of repentance, and full of bitter sorrow, pointing to the dead, he says, " Svaneld, that hast thou done ! "

These sharp pangs of Jaropolk's are the travelling pains preceding his own miscarriage and ruin. When Vladimir, Prince of Novgorod, hears of one brother's death, and of the

other's ambition, he flees across the sea to the Varagians.* Jaropolk then sends an officer to take possession of Novgorod, and thus becomes sole ruler of all Russia. The exiled brother, meanwhile, seeks means by which he may return with honour and might.

Hearing that great trust is placed in a nobleman, named Blud, he opens a secret correspondence with him. "Thy help is very much wanted," are his words, "thou shalt be as a father to me when Jaropolk is dead. Is he not guilty of a brother's blood? Only to defend my own life have I armed myself against him." The grovelling favourite is not ashamed to betray his benefactor. He advises Vladimir to invest Kiew immediately, and counsels Jaropolk to avoid by all means an open battle. They both do as he directs. The traitor's brother has a house in the city; thither, as to a robber's den, the credulous prince is led. He enters, the doors are all closed, and made fast, that his guards may not be able to run in to the rescue. Two Varagian soldiers then rush upon the unfortunate prince, pierce

* The Danes or Swedes.

his bosom with their swords, he falls at their feet, and dies.

Through this crime, and by means of Varagian valour, Vladimir has gained the Empire. He now shows great zeal for idolatry, sets up an image with a costly silver head in Kiew, and another richly adorned at Novgorod. He falls, likewise, into the sin of Solomon, the love of many women; and becoming exceedingly sinful, looks upon neither honour nor innocence as holy. He is another remarkable example of a man, who, after conquering an empire, is himself subdued by lust; who, able to rule others, is unable to rule himself. His conduct, nevertheless, proves that he is born for an empire; and, during the whole of his reign, strength and honour are added to him.

Crowned with victory, and full of glory, he will offer a sacrifice to his idols; and array the altar with a crimson clothing of human blood. He calls his nobles and elders: they decree, that the lot shall be cast among the citizens of Kiew for their sons and daughters; that the idol may choose the one most acceptable. The lot falls upon a young man, who is beautiful in body, and noble in spirit, the son of a Christian.

The father takes his son by the hand, and fearlessly cries aloud: "if your gods are truly God let them tear him from my arms." The misguided people, blinded by superstition, and made heartless by cruelty, instantly slay both father and son. The first and last Christian martyrs in heathen Kiew.

There are men who speak of the light and beauty of the religion of nature, of the harmlessness and simplicity of the heathen. They would have us to think that the old Hindoo and the African Negro, the wandering Sclavonic tribes and the Ancient Britons, were gentle and pure. Will they put out our eyes, and stop our ears? blind our judgment, and take away our reason? Are we to believe, that to worship an image is the highest flight of devotion? that impurity is the best social bond? and that the blood of infants is a fit present to the Most High? Such men merit withering scorn. Has an evil spirit taken out their brains? Has some foul lust sucked from their heart every drop of generous blood? Alas! we forget: these poor creatures, rather deserve our pity, and need our prayers. They are without God, while they live in God's world; without Christ,

though the light of redemption shines around them ; they speak of Christianity as but one of the various forms of human credulity, whereas it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

The renown of Vladimir drew around him Christian preachers, Mohammedan fakirs, and Jewish rabbins. He listened to them all attentively.

The spirited description of Mohammed's paradise, and the fair companions of the faithful, took possession of his imagination : but circumcision was abominable, and the command not to drink wine, stupid ; " Wine," said he, " is the Russian's joy ; without it we cannot live."

To the Jews he said : " Where is your own land ? " They answered, " Jerusalem is our City, but the Lord God has scattered us, in His anger, throughout the world." " And you venture, thus punished of God," he added, " to take upon yourselves to teach others ! We have no wish to lose our country, as you have lost yours."

A wise Greek, whose name is lost, stood up, and in a few words exposed the folly of false religions. He placed briefly, and with force,

before the King, from the Old and New Testaments, the power of God in creation, the beauty of Paradise, the sin of man drawing down a flood of waters, the calling out of a chosen people, the Redemption through Jesus Christ, and the seven Churches of Asia. Then he held up a picture of the last Judgment: the righteous, on the right hand, going through the gates of a heavenly city to everlasting life; the unrighteous, on the left hand, condemned, and sinking down to ruin and everlasting torment. Deeply moved, a sigh broke forth from the depths of Vladimir's heart, while he said: "Yes, blessed are the righteous; but, woe! woe to evildoers!" "Believe, and be baptized, then," said the philosopher, "and thou shalt be blessed."

A council is called. The nobles and elders assemble, and the king tells them what the Mohammedan has said, how the Jew spoke, and the Christian reasoned. They answer, "Every man praises his own faith. If you will choose the best, send wise men into the different countries, and let them learn which people most worthily honours God." The king sends ten of his wisest men, who, when they return to

Kiew, speak with contempt of the Mohammedan worship, but praise the Christian ; ending with these words : "He who has once tasted the sweet, has no wish for the bitter, so is it with us : since we have known how God is honoured at Constantinople, we have no desire for any other worship." Vladimir again assembles the nobles and elders, who thus give their opinion : "O, king, if the religion of the Greeks were not better than that of all the other children of men, your grandfather's queen, Olga, the wisest and best of her race, would not have embraced it."

Vladimir determines upon this, that he will, without delay, become a Christian ; but the pride of power, and lust for glory, will not allow him to humble himself in the eyes of the Greeks, by asking presently for baptism, or to receive it as one who had hitherto been stumbling in heathen darkness. He determines to conquer Christianity, with arms in his hand to take possession of salvation as the victor's prize, and he sends this message to the Emperors Basil and Constantine : "I desire to have your sister, the imperial daughter, to wife. In case you refuse,

I will come, and take possession of Constantinople, your royal residence." The Emperors, so far from refusing, are glad to comply; and hope, with the help of this mighty Russian Prince, to secure their throne, and establish their Empire. They reply: "It depends entirely upon yourself, whether or not you become our brother-in-law. By becoming a Christian, you will gain both the hand of the princess, and everlasting salvation."

The king, after his own baptism, hastens to enlighten the people. As a preparation for this godly work, the idolatrous services are discontinued, and the idols destroyed. Some of the images are broken to pieces, others are burnt. One of the most noted is tied to a horse's tail, beaten with sticks, and then thrown into the river. The astounded people do not venture to defend their gods, but bewail them with tears of superstitious sorrow. The day after, rich and poor, masters and servants, are all commanded to come and be baptized! They stream to the place, and stand in heaps; robbed of their old worship, they already turn from it, and feel sure, that the new religion must be very wise and good, or their prince

and his nobles would not have preferred it to the ancient faith. Vladimir comes, attended by the Grecian priests. At a given signal a mighty mass of people go down into the stream. They stand with the water up to the breast, and around the neck. Fathers and mothers hold up little children in their arms. Priests read the baptismal prayer, and sing: "Holy God, we praise Thee!" When the whole ceremony is completed, and the priests greet all the citizens of Kiew as Christians, Vladimir, with a delighted heart, and joyful eye lifted up to heaven, breaks forth in loud and fervent prayer: "Creator of heaven and earth, O, bless these Thy youngest children! Grant, that they may know Thee: Thee, the only God! and be confirmed in true religion. Be Thou, also, my Helper against all temptations to sin, that I may worthily praise Thy Holy Name!" The old annalist says: "heaven and earth rejoiced on that great day."

Vladimir would not further force the consciences of his people. In order to ground them in the knowledge of the religion which they had embraced, schools were erected, wherein the Holy Scriptures were read and

explained, which Cyril and Methodius, in the ninth century, had translated into the Slavonic language. These schools were hated at first as a great novelty. Noble women, whose children were forced to attend them, wept as if their dear ones were given up to death: the art of reading and writing being looked upon as a dangerous sorcery.

Christianity worked a mighty change among that people, even though presented to them in the corrupted Greek form of worship. How much mightier would have been the change had not the truth been so beclouded with error ! The onward march of ages has not stripped that Greek Church of superstition ; and, alas ! the people have not advanced in knowledge. False doctrine has risen up, cumbrous ceremonies press down the truth, idolatrous practices choke spirituality, and the Word of God is a sealed book. When we look at Mohammedanism in the East, impoverishing the land, and wasting the people ; at the Greek Patriarch holding Russia in the bondage of an old man's dotage ; at the Pope speaking kind words, and doing unkind acts ; claiming liberty for himself, and seeking to impose slavery on everybody

else ; deluding Austria, and oppressing Italy ; afraid of France, and hating England ; we long for the time, when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ.

“ The golden palace of my God
Towering above the clouds I see,
Beyond the Cherub's bright abode
Higher than Angel's thoughts can be.
How can I in these courts appear,
Without a wedding garment on ?
Conduct me, Thou Life-giver, there,
Conduct me to Thy glorious throne !
And clothe me with Thy robes of light,
And lead me through sin's darksome night,
My Saviour, and my God ! ”

Hymn from the Slavonic.

CHAPTER XII.

DARKNESS IN EUROPE.

Degradation of Women—Degradation of Men—Pride—Gregory VII.—Character—Policy with Nations—Henry IV.—Crusades—Children of France and Germany—Truth prevails over folly.

IN reading ancient history, in reference to the spread of Christianity through the world, the mind is led, again and again, to reflect upon the important part that has been played by women. Woman was the means of bringing in transgression, and she has been made the great means of bringing in salvation ; not only by the birth of our Redeemer, but also by spreading the knowledge of His name. England has reason to honour women, France has also, and Russia should not forget that Vladimir married a Christian princess.

The honour justly due to the female sex on this and other accounts, has been superstitiously abused by the Roman Catholic Church, in the undue homage of our Lord's mother, to the neglect of the Lord Himself. For ages women

were punished for their share in the first transgression by a life of degradation. Christianity has taken away that reproach, and raised them to honour. The danger now to be guarded against is the lifting up of one of the sex, as by the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, to the degradation of the others : for in so far as she is raised above them, do they fall below her. This is proved by the fact that women are now looked upon by the Romish Church as unclean, and the priests are separated from them. She whom God made to be man's "help meet," is declared to be no help : and what God said, "it is not good for man to be alone ;" they contradict by proclaiming that it is good for man, it is good for the priest, to be alone. (Gen. ii. 18.)

The degradation of women, by separating them from marriage with the priests, as if women were an inferior race, is not to be looked upon as a fact which has no connection with the history of Europe. One half of the race was dishonoured, and only allowed the dignity of serving-women and concubines, in order that the other half might be enslaved.

This desire, however, to trample down, is not confined to the Romish Church: it is deeply seated in human nature. Take a humorous illustration. Dr. Livingstone says that, in some parts of Africa where he travelled, a chief who makes a visit of more than ordinary ceremony, and with what is thought to be royal dignity, seats himself upon the shoulders of one of his subjects, and thus majestically enters the presence of his brother monarch. We may smile at such notions of dignity, but the fact underlying the custom is sufficiently solemn. Man, whether he wears a white skin or a black, is desirous of exaltation; and will get it, if he can, though it be at the expense, and to the lowering, of his fellow-man. The Indian chief bestriding his servant; and the Romish cardinal before whom the people kneel in the mud, and whose carriage they draw like beasts of burden; are pictures of the pride and degradation of human nature. The scarlet robe of the cardinal renders his picture the more striking; being that of a man glorying in what should be his shame; it is that of a man who trades in the profession of humility; who would have us

believe that he is a follower of the Meek and Lowly One who rode on an ass ; and whose example, nevertheless, he perverts to the making of the people asses, that he may ride on them.

* * * "Old women weep for joy :
 While others, not so satisfied, unhorse
 The gilded equipage, and turning loose
 His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.
 Why ? what has charm'd them ? Hath he sav'd
 the state ?
 No. Doth he purpose its salvation ? No.
 What then ? The moon is at the full, and she
 Hath found a crevice in their heads unsound."

Cooper.

Pride is most hateful, and most proud, when lurking under the cloak of humility ; and most disgustingly filthy when beslimed with sanctimonious protestations. Sacerdotal pride is an exceedingly poisonous plant which grows on that useful tree, the ministry. It is a creeper and parasite among men, first crawling, then climbing, and at last overshadowing all that is good. It draws out what is deadly from that which gives life, makes religion to be a plea for oppression, and liberty an incentive to licentiousness. The African toad creeps to the

fire, nearer and nearer it comes to the flame ; nor does it stop until, over the glowing embers, it has reached the centre to be consumed : strange infatuation ! The men who yield to domineering and hypocritical pride are toad-like : it is as if the judgment of the great day, and the flames of the eternal pit, only light them on, and draw them to their doom. They are warned, but they heed it not ; they hear, but they stop their ears ; they see, but they blind their eyes ; the glorious Gospel shines in vain. “ Woe unto you, Pharisees ! ” is again and again declared in Holy Scripture and History ; but they are as the three unclean spirits, which come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, and must go to their own place. How long, O, Thou lowly Redeemer ! shall any be found who make the religious garb to be a wolf’s clothing ; and the House of God, a den of thieves ? How long—

“ Shall wolves succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of heaven
To their own vile advantages do turn
Of lucre and ambition ; and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint ? ”

Milton.

Consider the true character, and dangerous nature of pride, when clothed with false humility ; and the deceitfulness of that hypocritical meekness which is ever seeking to put its foot on the necks of kings and people ; as revealed in the life of that Pope, who not only decreed the celibacy of the clergy, but spent his days and nights in labouring to render the popedom supreme, and to cast Europe prostrate at its feet.

Gregory the Seventh, by name Hildebrand, of Soano in Tuscany, was a monk of Cluny. Having gained fame by his canonical and theological learning, he went to Rome with Bruno, Bishop of Toul, who was made Pope in 1049, under the name of Leo IX. From this time Gregory directed all the papal policy under Leo, Victor II., Stephen IX., Nicholas II., and Alexander II. In the year 1073, Gregory was unanimously chosen Pope by the clergy and people of Rome. A stormy pontificate ended with a sorrowful death in exile at Salerno, 1085. His last words were : “ I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity : therefore, I die in exile.” (Ps. xlv. 7.)

Alas ! the hardness of his character during life, had darkened his mind in death.

By some he is loved, by others he is hated, as the founder of the papal monarchy. He rises before us as one mighty in genius, of unconquerable firmness, zealous perseverance, and the most important man of his age ; but when we draw near to him, we find that his features are marred with bigotry, pride, and unrelenting hostility. If we look at him as he weeps over his election to the popedom, and recollect the many sorrows, and the few joys of his life ; affectionate feelings run to open the door of our heart to him : but as memory recalls a painful sense of the deep impressions stamped by his arrogance upon the spirit of the age ; and our heart is chilled by the coldness of that stern ambition which filled Rome with blood, and the world with strife ; by raising subjects against their rulers, branding the married priest with infamy, and his wife with shame ; those feelings are driven back by disgust and abhorrence.

The true manliness of Gregory was crushed in the bud within the walls of his monkish cell. Christianity, such as he had, was not a

noble palace built up by the elevation of all that is good and true, and ever rising higher in the beauty of mental freedom. It was a prison house, falsely called a Church ; and he, with his motto, "Cursed be he who holds back his sword from blood," was the great jailor harnessed with a key and a scourge, tyrannical and eager to punish, in whom there was no love. Such a church is not the source whence flow to the nations refreshing waters of consolation ; but an unhallowed fountain spouting forth streams of salt and bitterness, which renders barren the surrounding lands. Such a Church is not the dwelling place of truth, where the pure and lowly flourish as in the house of God ; but a dreary building inhabited by emasculated men, who, under a profession of poverty, and the guise of a servant, beggar the people and enslave the world.

Gregory's whole pontificate was a continued scene of tumult and bloodshed. He usurped the privileges which had been formerly possessed by councils, and the valuable rights of the sacred colleges and bishops. Observe his dealings with France, England, some other countries, and Germany.

* * "He seeks to avail himself of names,
Places and titles, and, with these to join
Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act
By spiritual." * *

The dominion and dignity enjoyed by the Popes was conferred upon them, as is well known, by the French princes; but Gregory, in writing to Philip I., king of France, advises him to behave himself very humbly; for that both his kingdom and his soul were in subjection to the successor of St. Peter, who had power to bind and to loose him, both on earth and in heaven! *

He summons William the Conqueror to do homage to the apostolic see for the kingdom of England. William replies, "that he holds his kingdom of God only, and his own sword."†

Spain pays submissively and regularly an annual tribute; and Gregory modestly requests most of the German princes, the king of Hungary, and the king of Denmark, to make a solemn grant of their dominions to the prince of the Apostles, and to hold them in subjection

* "In ejus potestate est regnum tuum et anima tua, qui te potest in cœlo et in terra ligare et absolvere."

† "Fidelitatem facere, nolui nec volo."

to the see of Rome. He excommunicates the king of Poland, Basilaus II., dissolves the oath of allegiance taken by the subjects, and orders the nobles and clergy not to elect a new king without first obtaining permission from Rome. When asked, "Is it right to depose kings?" he replies by another question, "Did Christ, when he appointed Peter to be shepherd of His sheep, exclude kings from the flock?"

He, Gregory, and Henry IV. of Germany, hate one another with perfect hatred.

Henry sends a German count, Eberhard, to enquire why the cardinals have elected a Pope without his consent. Gregory receives Eberhard in the most friendly manner, and gives this answer: "I have been compelled by the cardinals, and people of Rome, to accept this honour; but have not allowed myself to be consecrated, and wait for the Emperor's confirmation." This confirmation is all the more desired, from the fact of Gregory intending to act against the Emperor himself.

Henry, licentious, ambitious, and always in want of money, sells sees and benefices to wicked and incapable men. In his conflict also with the Pope, he is guilty of the most

wavering policy : in prosperity, exacting and haughty ; in adversity, yielding and submissive. As we look at the man, we feel sure that he will be defeated.

Gregory, in council at Rome, A.D. 1074 and 1075, anathematizes persons guilty of simony, orders the deposition of all married priests, commands that all who are admitted henceforth to the priesthood shall make a vow of celibacy, and forbids kings and princes to confer the investiture of sees and abbeys. Henry takes no notice of all this. Then Gregory tampers with the discontented vassals of the Emperor ; and, supported by them, summons Henry to appear at Rome to answer for his evil deeds ; who, in reply, orders a diet of the empire at Worms, and deposes the Pope ; January, 1076.

The imperial prefect, Crescentius, who is at the head of the emperor's party, and has been banned like his master, determines to avenge himself. He forces his way into the Church where Gregory is reading mass, takes him prisoner, and drags him out, it is said, by the hair of his head.

Gregory summons a council at the Lateran Palace, 1076 ; deposes Henry from the throne,

absolves his subjects from their allegiance, and lays upon him the curse of the Church.*

This bold act is successful. The vassals rebel, and proceed to elect a new emperor; a delay, however, is obtained, and Henry sets out for Italy to meet the Pope. Not being able to go by the usual route, the Italian princes not consenting, he and his followers must go over the Alps through Burgundy. In the most terrible cold, and amidst frightful dangers, they cross the mountains. Here and there they creep upon all fours, often despairing of life, but they must go on; for time presses.

Friends intercede on behalf of the emperor. The Pope replies, "If the king feels true repentance, let him surrender to me the crown, and ensigns of royalty, and wait for my and the princes decree at Augsburg. If he consents to this, does public penance, and confesses that he is unworthy of the name of king, he shall be freed from the ban." The surrender of the crown, and the confession,

* It was the first time that a Pope had attempted to depose his master; for the Popes were the Emperor's vassals.

are withdrawn at last ; and Henry consents to do penance for his offences.

Behold him.

The castle of Canossa, near Reggio in Lombardy, was surrounded with three walls. In the court, between the second and innermost wall, having left at the gate his attendants and royal apparel, stands Henry as a penitent, in a coarse woollen garment, and barefooted. The outward garb of poverty is as nothing to the inward shame. It is piercingly cold, and he waits from morning till night ; so the second day, and so the third day. He is a spectacle to the world, a worm and no man, a disgrace to his crown, and a thing trodden upon. On the fourth he is permitted to see the Pope's face, humbly approaches, confesses his faults, and receives absolution.*

• • • " He that finds
One drop of Heav'n's sweet mercy in his cup,
Can dig, beg, rot, and perish, well content,
So he may wrap himself in honest rags
At his last gasp ; but would not for a world
Fish up his dirty and dependent bread
From pools and ditches of the priestly heart."

* "Geschichte des Kampfes zwischen den Deutschen Königen und den Päpsten."—*Heinrich Leo*.

It was the idea of extending papal power, to the same extent, over the whole of Europe, that made Gregory favorable to the crusades. The recovery of Palestine was not so much his object, as the acquisition of temporal power. To effect this, under the pretence of that, he, and his successors, precipitated Europe upon Asia ; and sought to quench in the sands of the East, the rising intellect of the West. Millions of Christians perished in the conflict, which extended through two centuries. The Popes gained an overwhelming power, afflicted Europe with religious wars and persecutions, and surrounded it with dark clouds of bigotry and fanaticism.

The more distant results were, nevertheless, of a beneficial character. The activity of political life was increased in Europe ; the feudal system, broken up ; the mercantile towns in Italy, made prosperous ; and men, having paid blood and treasure for their foolish subjection to the Popes, began to see their folly, and to reflect independently for themselves. The Inquisition, established in the thirteenth century, proves that there were sufficient able and thoughtful men to excite alarm among the

bigots; and it was reserved as a peculiar ignominy for the Romish Church, that she alone of all Churches and religions, should, for centuries, enforce a crafty, grinding, and inquisitorial system of persecution. Good men, nevertheless, dared to utter their opinions; then, after the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, Greek literature spread through Europe; and, at length, the Reformation restored to many lands the pure light of the Gospel, and to many people liberty of conscience.

To show the folly of these Crusades, take a remarkable phase in their history.

In the year 1212, the restless activity of Innocent III.* stirs up such a feverish excitement in reference to the Holy Land, as produces a strange and an unexpected result. Men universally speak about crusading, but the setting out is postponed or avoided for various reasons; when suddenly the youth of France and Germany are seized with enthusiasm, and mere boys determine to rescue the holy grave and city out of the hand of the heathen.

* Friedrich Wilken, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*.

A young cow-herd named Stephen, from a village of Vendome on the Loire, gives out that the Redeemer has appeared in the form of a poor pilgrim, appointed him preacher of the cross to the young, and given him a letter to the king of France. He persuades other herd-boys to join him; performs, it is said, some miracles; and in a short time is surrounded by a multitude of young people. In various parts of France other youthful preachers of the cross appear, who likewise perform wonders, and as they all acknowledge the youth of Vendome as their leader, the hope of a brilliant victory over the Saracens is more and more confirmed. They begin to look upon the cow-herd as a holy being, and count themselves happy can they secure but a thread from his garment. The command of the king, Philip Augustus, is disregarded, the advice of friends and tears of sisters are in vain; tearing themselves from the embrace of their mothers, they march through the towns with banners, censers, tapers, and crosses, and sing as they march; "O, Lord God! exalt Christianity: O, Lord God! give us again the true cross."

Even youthful maidens join these processions ; young men and old, labourers from the towns and villages, and ploughmen from the field, leave their occupation and bring up the rear. The young enthusiasts, as they proceed, receive food and alms from the people, and say, " We are going to God, and to seek for the cross on the other side of the sea."

The contagion spreads through Burgundy and Germany. On the borders of the Rhine especially, youths of every class assume the cross, proclaiming, " God has commanded us to go to Jerusalem and rescue the Holy Land." They are soon joined by crafty knaves who rob them of that which has been given to them by the pious and charitable. One of these rascals is seized, and expiates his crime upon the gallows at Cologne. The German children do not unite themselves to the French, but each nation marches a different way.

Follow the steps of these youthful Germans.

Thousands of boys and girls, clothed in long pilgrim frocks marked with crosses, staff in hand, and wallet on the shoulder, give themselves to the standard of a boy named Nicolas, and set out for Italy. Before they reach the

Alps, many perish in the woods and wilds, with hunger, thirst, and heat; others fall into the hands of robbers on the other side of the Alps; some few return to their homes naked, wasted, and weary.

In the month of August, 1212, an immense number of them, part only twelve years of age, followed by many grown men and women, arrive at the city of Genoa. The wonderful sight fills the people with astonishment and fear, but the latter soon gives place to pity, for the pilgrims are without money and weapons, and nourish the vain hope that God will dry up the sea for them, in order that they may march without hindrance to Jerusalem. They are guilty, at the same time, of great excesses and the grossest sensuality; a number of licentious women accompanying them. The Genoese are not to be blamed for insisting that the host shall immediately leave their territory; allowing those who are weary of the mad project to remain behind in the city. Marching on, but now ever decreasing in number, and glad to take shelter anywhere, some reach Pisa, others Rome, and others Brindisi, till at length the

host is broken up. Singly, and full of shame, a scoff and a joke, barefooted and hungry, some few wandered back again to their own homes.

The Pope, Innocent III., instead of checking these violent excesses, and recalling these misguided little ones to their parents, will not even release the returning penitents from their undertaking, but orders that in riper age they shall set out again. Only the extremely aged, and very little children, are set free. This is not the way to feed the lambs of Christ's flock.

The French children meet with a still worse fate. Empty in pocket but full of hope, about thirty thousand set out for Marseilles. Stephen is their leader. He travels in a carriage adorned with tapestry, and attended by a body guard of armed youths. The wretched creatures are miserably deceived by two wretches, Hugo Ferreus, and William Porcus, who prevail upon the guileless children to trust themselves in their hands in order to be conveyed free of cost to Syria. Seven large vessels are loaded with them; two of the ships are wrecked upon an island on the West coast of Sardinia after two days' sail; the other five escape the storm, and reach not Syria but

Egypt, where the villians sell them all as slaves.

When the emperor, Frederick II., hears of this barbarous exploit, he causes the two slave dealers to be hanged.

Such folly as this would be sufficient to ruin any false faith. The violence and ambition of the Popes, would have raised the nations in a mass to cast out any religion that was not from God. The existence of Christianity in spite of so many dangers, and such great crimes committed by professing Christians, may not unreasonably be deemed a proof of its divine origin.

Take, in illustration, an amusing tale from a great Italian author.

Abraham, a Jew, went to Rome to see the manner of living practised by the so-called Vicar of God, and the priests. Returning, he thus spoke to his Christian friend, "I saw there no sanctity, no devotion, no good work, nor example of life in that which a clergyman should be; but luxury, avarice, gluttony, fraud, envy, pride, and worse things, if any can be worse, so much in favour with all; that I should rather have

taken that place as a forge of devilish operations, than of divine works. As far as I can judge, it seems that the Pope, and all the others, who there ought to be its foundation and support, labour with every care, talent, and art, to bring the Christian religion to nothing, and to drive it from the world. In spite, nevertheless, of all that they are striving to bring about, your religion increases, and becomes brighter, more shining and pure; from this I conclude, and rightly, that the Holy Spirit, purer and holier than any other foundation, is its stay and support: wherefore, though I rigidly and obstinately resisted your arguments, and would by no means consent to become a Christian, now, I frankly confess, nothing shall cause me to delay. Let us go then to the Church, and there, according to the custom of your holy faith, let me be baptized.”*

“And through Faith look, beyond this dark abode,
To scenes of glory near the throne of God!”

* “*Quivi nuina santità, nuina divozione, nuina buona opera o esempio di vita o d'altro, in alcuno che cherico fosse, veder mi parve; ma lussuria, avarizia et gulosità fraude, invidia e superbia, e simile cose e piggiori (se piggiori essere possono in alcuno) mi vi parve in tanta*

grazia di tutti vedere, che io ho più tosto quella per una fucina di diaboliche operazioni, che di divine. E per quello che io estimi, con ogni sollecitudine e con ogni ingegno e con ogni arte, mi pare che il vostro Pastore, e per consequenti tutti gli altri, si procaccino di ridurre a nulla e di cacciare del mondo la Cristiana religione, là dove essi fondamento e sostegno esser dovrebbero di quella. E perciò che io veggio non quello avvenire che essi procacciano, ma continuamente la vostra religione aumentarsi, e più lucida e più chiara divenire; meritamente mi par, discernere lo Spirito Santo esser d'essa, sì come di vera e di santa più che alcun' altra, fondamento e sostegno. Per la qual cosa, dove io rigido e duro stava a' tuoi conforti, e non mi volea far Cristiano, ora tutto aperto ti dico, che io per nuina cosa lascerei di cristian farmi. Andiamo adunque alla chiesa, e quivi secondo il debito costume della vostra santa fede, mi fa' battezzare."—*Abraam Giudeo di Boccaccio.*

CHAPTER XIII.

HEATHENISM OF ROME.

Address to Rome—Pope—Priests—Societies—Customs—
Hypocrisy—A Heathen Priest awakes.

"In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contracted faults through all his manners reign :
Though poor, luxurious ; though submissive, vain ;
Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet untrue :
And even in penance plaining sins anew."

Italy.—Goldsmith.

ROME, what a picture rises to view when we think of thee ! Heathenism has passed away, but yet idolatry remains. The ancient valour has fled, and slavery dwells in thy abodes of ignorance and vice. Processions and poverty, spectacles and misery, are blended. Priests and paupers swarm, well fed and ill fed ; the faces of those without one beam of intelligence, or mark of a holy wish ; and the eyes of these, eager, beseeching, and woe-begone. Men, who are formed in the image of God, bow down to images made of wood and stone. The place

of the Creator is taken by the creature. Noble monuments of man's genius are surrounded, and disfigured, by ignorance and superstition. A blessing is pronounced with much pomp upon the cattle, but the Word of God is kept most carefully from the people. Freedom of thought, of speech, of press, and of tribunal, where art thou ?

I think I see a Juggernaut with rolling car and bloody wheels, crushing the bodies and souls of men. Marcellinus cast into prison by Diocletian ; Leo braving Attila, " the Scourge of God ;" Ambrose at the porch of the Church rebuking, and sending back, the blood-stained Emperor Theodosius ; all have passed away : and the glorious *Te Deum* is drowned by the cries of martyred men, and women, and children slain. The Church of Christ is become a den of dark intrigue and a cavern of corruption. Would that the light of Savonarola's pile at Florence, and the fire that consumed Arnolfo at Rome, had lightened and purified thee ! Dungeons with thick walls, murderous traps, deep wells with quicklime to decompose dead men's bones, skeletons immured, mural inscriptions, the work of prisoners' horrors ! Are these what the Re-

deemer delights in? Alas! the image of Jesus has been made to preside in Satan's court! The cup of blessed communion, the cross, and all the emblems of the love of God, have been prostituted, and made unwilling witnesses of scenes of horror in dark places. Man was ashamed of them, and covered them up in darkness and secrecy; but priests went to those horrid abodes and cruel sights, and took with them all the symbols of peace and purity, as if to make God do the thing He hated. Did Jesus torture? Did he call for fire and faggot? Rome, thou hast professedly received Christianity, but as the brutal Azerro of Cordova, the priestly executioner, said, "Give me a Jew, and I will shew in my crucible a residuum of ashes:" thou hast taken Jesus, the blessed Jew, and made Him and His Holy faith to be blood and ashes to myriads of men.

I see a woman, like a harlot, rising up, and with many abominations defiling the earth. She has purple and scarlet, is decked with gold and precious stones, and has in her hand a golden cup of fornications. She wears on her head a triple crown, put there by Satan to deceive the world, but on her forehead is a

name written by the Lord for warning ; "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the Earth." Her girdle is hung round with beads and crosses ; her pouch is full of thumbscrews and pincers ; with one foot she crushes Europe, with another South America, and with her breath she withers and blasts Italy. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. xviii. 4.)

As Paul rebuked Peter, England reproves Rome ; and as Peter repented, may Rome reform. O ! if the Pope, the cardinals, and the priests, would confess their faults unto the people, put away the evil of their doings, and wash themselves in the blood of Christ ; how gladly would all England help them to throw away their superstitious indulgencies, and to make honest men and women of their monks and nuns. What a noble fire would be made of the relics ! How readily would the people help them off with the robes borrowed from heathendom, and buy a candle to light them in the reading, in all the places that they have made so dark, a full and true recantation of every error ! Rome would then be a Phœnix indeed ;

find not only Peter's hook with which he caught the fish that had silver in its mouth, but Peter's net in which he caught dead men's souls and made them live.

Look at Papal Rome as existing at the present moment, and contrast her rites and ceremonies with ancient heathen customs.

"See the wild waste of all devouring years!

How Rome her own sad sepulchre appears!"

Pope.

A sovereign pontiff, called a Pope, as Jupiter the false God had been,* calls himself, as did the heathen sovereign pontiff, the vicegerent of God. Men not only cast themselves before him, they must kiss his feet. It is true that the Pope deserves as much honour as did the heathen priest, but it is not right that the Pope should make himself like the heathen priest.

A crowd of priests follow the Pope. Their heads are shaved, they have on a white garment, called alba; and they have tunics, amicts, and pectorals. They march round the altar, and front the people; there are lighted tapers, burning incense, many prostrations, the speak-

* "Ζεὺς δὲ ὀρθότατα κατὰ γνώμην γε τὴν ἐμὴν καλεόμενος Παπᾶϊτος."—*Herodoti, lib. iv. cap. 59.*

ing of Latin, the sprinkling of the people with salted water, called holy, the offering of a wafer, which is called God, the locking of it up, and the dismissing of the people.

What is the essential difference between these men, and those olden Pagan priests? who wore the same garments, who offered a little round wafer, who sprinkled water, spoke of immolation, and the unbloody sacrifice! who abstained from meats, had painful fasts, dreadful lacerations, and professed to live in celibacy! who charged money for rescuing souls from the furies, prayed for the dead, carried in their processions an altar, the mysteries, and an image! who, at appointed places in the market, and at corners of streets, set up an image and worshipped! What is the difference between these modern priests, and those of olden time? who deified men, offered prayers to the creature, and took Apollo, or Neptune, for their patron! who went on pilgrimage, and put coats, crutches, and candles, before a divine virgin or mother! What is the difference between Pagan and Papal Rome?

Both sets of priests, the Pagan and the

Romish, make a market of souls : some they plunge into a dreadful gulf, for others they open the gates of Paradise with a golden key ; both use vain repetitions, count their prayers, and have a string of beads. What is the difference ?

Is it this ?

The ancient priests, when calumniators said that they believed and taught, that in eating the wafers they fed on the body of their God, denied the gross absurdity, and said, " who ever discovered a race of men so empty of understanding, as to believe that that which they eat was their god ? " Romish priests, on the contrary, pretend to make, worship, and then eat, that which they call Lord ! Is this the difference ?

Further.

Pagan Rome had religious societies. The Arval Brethren went in procession through the fields, and sacrificed, in order that a blessing might come to make the earth fruitful. There were mendicants who lived upon the sweat of the people, like the begging friars. Brethren of the Societies of Augustine, Hadrian, and Antonine, were well known. They wore a pecu-

liar kind of dress, and went barefoot; some were always silent, others took a vow of poverty, and they all lived in convents. The six vestal virgins of Ancient Rome seem to have been mothers, in spite of their vows of chastity, to all the modern nuns. And :

“ Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array’d,
The pasteboard triumph, and the cavalcade ;
Processions form’d for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,
The sports of children satisfy the child :
Each nobler aim, repress by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul.”

Italy.—Goldsmith.

Again.

The priests of Pagan Rome enjoined most painful fasts. There were cruel scourgings. Some shaved their heads, some went on pilgrimages. They prayed for the dead, when they were paid for the prayers, and the Elysean fields were thus let out on hire. There were grand processions, and the carrying of lighted tapers. There were many festivals, in which relics and images were seen. Men were deified, or sainted, and the people had their peculiar patrons. Apollo protected from the plague, and Juno was besought to save in childbirth.

The Pagan priests used their purgatory so well as to get a revenue both out of the dead and the living. The Papal priests do the same, and have made the Pantheon, which was sacred to all the gods of Olympus, sacred to all the saints of Paradise. Truly the Papists have not so much converted the Pagans, as the Pagans have perverted the Papists !

The fault is, not that Paganism was so much like Popery, but that Papal Christianity is so much like Paganism. The evil is, that as infidelity resulted from the Pagan system, so does infidelity spring up wherever Popery is planted. The olden philosophers and magistrates viewed with a smile of pity and indulgence, the various errors of the vulgar ; and hiding the opinions of an atheist under the sacerdotal robes, drew near to the idol with external reverence and inward contempt. In modern days kings and princes, cardinals and priests, devoutly frequent the temples. In an unknown tongue, with prayers to and for the dead, and clothed with the old garments of heathenism, they bow down. At the sound of the same little bell, while incense is burned after the ancient fashion, and salted water of

olden type sprinkled, the people prostrate themselves. Is this worship? Look at the prince and the priest, they inwardly smile at the credulity of the people, but outwardly seem to approve it. They think that it is false, but, as they find it useful, they are content ; and while the people worship the Virgin or Mother, the very thing the heathens did, the prince and the priest condescend to act their part with not less outward shew of devotion, and inward contempt, than did the rulers of olden times.

Suppose a heathen priest to awake from his long sleep. He enters a temple at Rome, formerly dedicated to The Good Goddess, now to the Virgin Mary. He sees the incense burning, and the water sprinkled. There is a little change in the building, and the people are not clad in the style he is used to, but his brethren, the priests, are for the most part known to him by their ceremonies and their clothing. They have the wafer, the host, the unbloody sacrifice, the alba, the coloured tunic, the shaven head, the pectoral, the washing of hands, the marching round the altar, the obeisance to it, lighted tapers, and appointed prostrations. The heathen priest is a little bewildered by some things,

the Latin is not quite as it was, but upon the whole he is satisfied, and feels himself at home.

Let that same priest enter a Protestant temple. The minister is clothed in simple garments ; there are no prayers to departed men and women. God alone is worshipped. He cannot fall into the error of believing that The Good Goddess is adored ; for he sees nothing to remind him of her. He will be convinced that another deity, the Lord, is there ; and if he falls down on his face, it is to worship the unseen God. There will be no uncertain sound, neither posture nor imposture, neither incense nor nonsense ; but the true spirit of worship embodied in a simple form, offered in a beautiful, not luxurious temple, and poured out of a devout heart under the guidance of an enlightened mind, in the spirit of the following lines :

“ Lord, teach us how to pray aright,
With reverence and with fear ;
Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,
We may—we must draw near :
God of all grace, we come to Thee,
For broken, contrite hearts :
Give what Thine eye delights to see,
Truth in the inward parts.

Give deep humility,—the sense
Of godly sorrow give,—
A strong desiring confidence
To see Thy face and live,—
Faith in the only sacrifice
That can for sin atone,
To cast our hopes, to fix our eyes,
On Christ, on Christ alone."

♦

A TALE ABOUT ST. ANTHONY.

ST. ANTHONY, being in the wilderness, led a very hard and strait life, insomuch that none at that time did the like ; to whom came a voice from heaven, saying : " Anthony, thou art not so perfect as a cobbler that dwells at Alexandria." Anthony, hearing this, rose up forthwith, took his staff, and went till he came to Alexandria, where he found the cobbler. The cobbler was astonished to see so reverend a father come to his house. Then Anthony said, " Come and tell me thy whole conversation, and how thou spendest thy time." " Sir," said the cobbler, " as for me, good works have I none, for my life is but simple and slender ; I am but a poor cobbler. In the morning, when I rise, I pray for the whole city wherein I dwell, specially for my neighbours and poor friends ; then I set me at my labour, where I spend the whole day in getting my living ; I keep me from all falsehood, for I hate nothing so much as deceitfulness : wherefore, when I make to any man a promise, I keep and do it truly. And so I spend my time poorly, with my wife and children, whom I teach and instruct, as far as my wit will serve me, to fear and dread God : this is the sum of my simple life." In this story you see how God loves those who follow their vocation, and live uprightly, without falsehood in their dealing. This Anthony was a great holy man ; yet this cobbler was as much esteemed before God as he.—*Bishop Latimer's Fifth Sermon on the Lord's Prayer.*

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Men live beneath themselves—Napoleon Bonaparte—
Jaffa—St. Jean d'Acre—Cruelty Punished—War sup-
port War—His Character—Death.

“HAPPY the man, who sees a God employ'd
In all the good and ill that checker life!
Resolving all events with their effects
And manifold results, into the will
And arbitration wise of the Supreme.”

Cowper.

MEN are, for the most part, unmindful of the purpose for which they were placed on the earth, and live beneath their true and proper dignity. Nero, instead of caring for his empire, gave himself to vice and the viol. Biantes, a Lydian, seemed to think that the best way to mend the habits of the people was to file needles. A Macedonian king, Æropus, sought to enlighten his country by making lanterns. A Parthian king, Harcatius, was the best mole-catcher of his time ; and Commodus,

the Roman Emperor, was a potter and made cups. Of others, we may say with Cowper :—

“Great princes have great play-things. Some have
played
At hewing mountains into men, and some
At building human wonders mountain-high.”

These men, as kings, wasted their time : lantern making, mole catching, and cup forming, are not kingly employments. It is not, however, the great only, and those who are called to high offices and to honourable burdens in the state, who degrade themselves by sordid business ; all men are apt to grovel, and live beneath themselves. They will chase the butterfly of pleasure, even with toil, to their own ruin ; trick out their persons, adorn their houses, and swell themselves with pride to their own downfall ; but the real dignity of manhood, the duties belonging to the station of life in which they have been placed by divine providence, their kingly office as God's representatives, and their eternal destiny, they forget, or at least neglect.

On the brow of every man is the diadem of a king, in his hand a sceptre, and within the

deep recesses of his heart the scroll of an endless life : but in wiping away the sweat of daily toil and care, the crown is pushed aside, and falls ; in catching at straws the sceptre is lost ; and sometimes by the door of the senses, at others by the window of the imagination, the devil lets himself into the heart, and steals the scroll of life.

Did men realize that their position in this world is providential, and that their future destiny is eternal ; they would not throw away their privileges, nor so rashly destroy their souls. It is no excuse to say that they are tempted ; they are warned against temptation, and to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Moreover, by means of the Holy Scriptures, and the grace of God through Christ Jesus, help is provided for them against temptation. These are all powerful, and that which a man, through the weakness of his nature, could not do, he is by these enabled to do. He may learn to be content in whatsoever state he is ; may know how to be abased, and how to abound ; to be full, and to be hungry ; not to behave himself unseemly, not to be easily provoked, and to think no evil. He may do

all things, needful for salvation, through Christ who strengthens him.

No man, who is in poverty or trouble, should think that he is uncared for, or forgotten by his God: amidst the rush and whirl of worlds there is not a grain of sand that moves without the Almighty's bidding, nor rests in peace but by His word.

" A dew-drop falling on the wild sea-wave,
Exclaimed in fear—' I perish in this grave ;'
But in a shell received, that drop of dew
Unto a pearl of marvellous beauty grew ;
And, happy now, the grace did magnify
Which thrust it forth, as it had feared, to die."

God cares for man more tenderly than a loving father for his child, and the noble destiny which awaits all the children of God, so clearly revealed in the promises of Scripture, should cheer every fainting heart, and lift up every cast down soul; nor ought the brilliant career of many who cannot be called Christians, to cast any doubt upon the reality and justness of God's Providence: for the flashing meteor, as it crosses the arch of heaven, mars not the brilliancy of those everlasting stars which shone before the meteor was seen by human eye, and

shine on still when its bright rays are quenched in darkness; even so the star-like destiny of God's own children, shines in the pure light of heaven, far above every earthly change, fixed in the firmament of God's eternal purpose.

Take a few facts from the history of a well-known man to illustrate the Providence of God; and the way in which He punishes the cruel and ambitious through and by their own deeds.

One year and five months before the conquest of the island of Corsica, and its unjust annexation to the French dominions, a boy was born at Ajaccio, the fifth of February, seventeen hundred and sixty-eight; who, in consequence of that act of tyranny, became a French citizen, afterwards entered the army, became master of everything that France contained, established military despotism, and thus punished the people for their act of spoliation. This boy was Napoleon Bonaparte.

Consider his stern cruelty.

Suppose that we are in Jaffa, (anciently Joppa,) the first large town in Palestine, to which the French come in their invasion of

the East. They storm it on the 6th of March, 1799. Dreadful carnage takes place, and all the most frightful of war's horrors are executed. Look, four thousand men take refuge in those old huts, and cry from the windows, that they will lay down their arms on condition of their lives being spared. This is agreed to, and they are marched, all the four thousand, to Napoleon's head-quarters. See how angry he is that quarter has been given. The miserable creatures are all made to sit down, with their hands tied behind their backs. After a while biscuit and water are given to them, and a council of war is called in order to decide their fate. For two days they debate, "what shall be done with the prisoners?" Draw nigh, and hear what they say: "We cannot spare a guard to carry them back to Egypt; we can neither keep nor feed them, for there is already a scarcity of food in the camp; and we dare not set them at liberty, for that will be to strengthen the hands of the enemy." It is resolved that the prisoners shall all be put to death. On the 10th of March they are firmly fettered, marched down to the sand-hills upon the sea-coast, then divided into companies, and mowed down by

successive discharges of musketry. They are fired at for hours, and those not slain by the bullet are slaughtered with the bayonet. A young man bursts his bonds in the fearfulness of terror, throws himself at the feet of the French officers, and with agony implores them to save his life. They sternly refuse. He is bayoneted at their feet !

For years afterwards the sound of their dying shrieks rang in the ears of those who saw the butchery. The bones are yet in the sand-hills of the desert. The Arab turns aside in horror. They are a sad memento of human atrocity.

Let us think that we are now in sight of Acre, having swept round Mount Carmel, the 16th of March. Sir Sidney Smith is within the walls. He has brought forty-four guns from his few vessels that lie in the port, and some marines and sailors. The French furiously attack, and make a breach; they rush to the assault, but are driven back with slaughter to their trenches. Again, on the 1st of April, they make a fierce but vain attempt. The siege is now prosecuted in form.

In May, the grenadiers gain the rampart, and the tricolour flag waves from the tower in the morning breeze. The gallant Sir Sidney Smith leads on his men, those English hearts, O, how they shout ! The muzzles of the muskets touch each other, large stones are hurled, spears and standards entwine in hostile struggle, and the French are driven back again. Elsewhere there is danger, entrance has been forced on another side, and everything seems lost. Smith now heads a regiment of Janizaries, there is a terrible rush, the bright steel flashes fire, only to be quenched in a stream of blood, the enemy is cut off from the breach by which he entered, and Smith again conquers.

Napoléon cries, "the fate of the East is in that fort : I will try again." A colonel, as he heads his regiment for the assault, exclaims, " If Acre is not taken this night, be sure that I am slain." By morning light he lies dead beside the wall.

There is not a sound to be heard, it is that awful stillness in which the tempest gathers strength, and the blood-stained sun is sinking wearily to rest, when, lo ! a massive column moves from the trench with firm and

solemn step. The breach is carried, the wall gained, and the Pasha's garden entered; but there the Turks, sabre in one hand and dagger in the other, attack with resistless fury, and slay them all! Other columns follow: every man finds his grave! Napoleon's Guides, his last reserve, boldly attack, but are driven back with fearful loss; the air is full of fire, the ground is red with blood. Three thousand of his bravest troops have perished, the charm of his invincibility is broken, his dreams of Oriental conquest have vanished, and Napoleon, for the first time in his life, orders a retreat. Years after he said, again and again, of Sir Sidney Smith, "that man made me miss my destiny."

It was not Smith who made him miss his destiny: it was his own cruelty, which, by the just retribution of God, fought against, and conquered him. The slaughter at Jaffa of the defenceless prisoners made the soldiers at Acre fight desperately, for they expected a like fate. It was despair that sharpened the Turkish sword; the four thousand unjustly slain were a mighty help to Smith, made the battlements of Acre invincible, and dug the graves for the

best and bravest of Napoleon's army. Far better would it have been to let those poor men live, little harm could they have done without their weapons ; far better to have let them go to Acre, they would have impoverished and weakened the arms of the garrison. A deed of mercy disarms hostility. It may be, that Sir Sidney Smith had fought in vain but for that deed of blood, which made furious the garrison of Acre, and tenfold strong ; and Napoleon, instead of perishing on the rock of St. Helena, would have left, as a mighty conqueror, to his children the empire of France, and an eastern throne.*

As we^e are on the battle-field, it will be well to look at the fate of armies for another illustration of the manner in which evil is punished.

Wellington had but a small army in Portugal, and yet the cost of it was £230,000 a month. The French, acting on the old Roman system of making war support war, did not allow their armies to cost them a farthing as soon as they entered a hostile state. The English paid for everything that they had, and

* Alison's Europe, chap. xxvi.

the further they went from the coast the greater were their expenses. The French, on the contrary, fearlessly entered the most desolate districts, and prepared no magazines ; they wrung out of the wretched inhabitants, by military violence, ample supplies ; and lived for months where the English could not have stayed a week. The people at Paris were pleased because their soldiers cost them so little ; and the people of England complained, that their's cost them so much. The French generals had great advantages, and, for a time, but little trouble ; the English commanders had great trials, and well-nigh insurmountable difficulties : nevertheless, the honest way of paying for what you have, proved, in the end, the better policy.

The French were scattered over the country in search of food, and the inhabitants often slew them ; the foraging parties were cut off by the light cavalry of the enemy, and many more were lost on the Elbe in this way, than by pitched battles. Three hundred thousand men perished by famine in Russia, in 1812 ; and one hundred thousand in Saxony, in 1813. Moreover, the troops being scattered, time was

lost in collecting them, and a large army dispersed was not so strong as a small one collected. In the Peninsula, Wellington never had more than 60,000 men to bring into the field; yet, by keeping his soldiers together, he gained all those wonderful victories against an enemy who had 240,000 veterans under command. England, acting on an honourable principle, had her soldiers hailed as friends and deliverers in every land. The French, who went with the words of liberty and equality on their lips, but with oppression and violence in their hands, were risen against by all nations; and their destruction is owing, not so much to the skill of the generals who were opposed to them, as to the deep hatred which filled all ranks of men on account of the cruelty and horrible oppression of their military rule. The people rose as one man, when the signal was given, by the retreat from Russia, to strike for freedom. In 1813, there were 400,000 brave men round the French eagles on the Elbe. A mighty force fit to conquer the world. There was a truce. Hostilities commenced again. Within two months, that army was swept as by a whirlwind of death from the

German fields, Spain was delivered, and Europe freed. Six months more, Napoleon himself was prisoner in a petty island, and the French Revolution, with its crimes and blood, was a thing of the past. Who will deny the fact that there is, even in human affairs, a retribution for evil deeds?

Look again, and behold the punishment of ambition.

Napoleon Bonaparte had wonderful knowledge of every high and noble principle in human nature. He could make such appeals to it, as stirred up all that was generous and valiant in the minds of his people; and when they flocked to his banner, he led them to victory. He was, nevertheless, a man whom no moral obligations could bind. Wherever his interest, or glory, or necessities required; he had an iron fixedness of purpose, which made his will invincible, and led others, and even himself, to think that he was a man of fate. His talents were of the highest order: a lively imagination, fervent passions, and poetic genius; guided by the highest reason, and profoundest judgment, he would have been great in whatever he had un-

dertaken. With all his talents, however, he was not good ; and, instead of a blessing, he must be deemed a scourge of mankind. For the sake of his own ambition he dug the graves of millions of men. To gain the love of his people, he let them loose to rob and slay other nations. He supported religion, because he thought that it was politically useful ; and justice, as being expedient. Talent he developed, having need of it ; but good feelings, or right principles, he cared for only so far as they favoured his plans. He was unmoved in danger, dauntless in the face of obstacles, and unwearyed in labour. He would be on horseback for eighteen hours at a time, dictate all night to his secretaries, and sleep amidst the roar of cannon. It is well that his prudence did not equal his genius, for otherwise, it is probable that he would have gained universal dominion, and crushed the world under the heel of military despotism. He was covetous of glory : the desire of it proved his bane. He was reckless of slaughter, and regardless of his word : slaughter drove men to madness, and want of truthfulness made him to be distrusted when he needed most to be believed. He placed

himself at the head of Europe, and for fifteen years he ruled. Europe placed him in St. Helena, and there he died. Had he warred for the establishment of peace, had he shed blood that human life might be safe, had he borne the sword in defence of the oppressed, then would he have been a benefactor of mankind: but his name casts a long and deep shadow over Europe, and is written in letters of blood emblazoned with fire. The flames of Moscow outshine his glory, and the wail of millions rise above the song of his praise.

There is but little ground for hope that this great conqueror ever subdued himself, or became in any way reconciled to the adversity of his latter end. When General Sir Hudson Lowe, to whose care he was entrusted, desired to know in what manner, and when, it would be most convenient and least unpleasant to his majesty, to be seen once in every twenty-four hours; a scornfully indignant refusal was the only answer. He would shut, and lock himself up, and even hide beneath the bed-clothes, in order that he might not be seen. Finding that he could not endure total solitude, he chose the youngest of those who attended him, a phy-

sician, to be his companion. Many times they walked together to the brow of a hill, about a mile from Longwood, from whence could be seen Saint James's Town and the shipping. Then Napoleon, looking towards Europe, broke the profound silence which was generally maintained till he reached that spot, and gave vent to fearful bursts of rage. He raised his voice, stretched out his hands, and with curses, deepening in fearful horror as his fury became more frantic, called down vengeance on his foes. After this he would return to his residence at Longwood, and cast himself, wearied and exhausted, upon the bed.

Sometimes he would be free in his manner, and pleasantly receive visitors; but the intensity of those continued violent passions, the aggravated bitterness of disappointment, and his refusal to take exercise, visibly ruined his health. He died, after being some time delirious, on the fifth of May, a little before six o'clock in the evening.

It is impossible for a sensitive mind to read about these things without experiencing the most painful feelings. Alas! what is man, and

all his glory, when he acts contrary to the will of God? Is it not better to die as a Christian, even if it be in prison, upon the rack, or in the fire, than to look with bitter anguish upon the past, and with fearful dread to the future? The crown which Napoleon wore was lined with thorns, and they pierced his brow, in spite of the velvet; the exile which he was forced to bear crushed his spirit, and bruised every hope. He lost the crown, it was a bauble, a phantom; and yet his day's hope and night's dream were set upon it: and because his arms could not win it back again, he dug his own grave with the fierceness of unbridled passions. Alas! unhappy man. A brilliant spectacle of misery. A fearful warning against ambition. A solemn proof that there can be no peace of mind, unless the love of God is in the heart.

His dominion, how wide! His grave, how narrow! and yet his throne, his ambition, his hopes, all went into it!

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

CHAPTER XV.

ENGLAND.

Country Scenes—Ancient Times—A Scotch Tragedy—
James II.—Declaration of Indulgence—Bishops—Tower
—Trial—Acquittal.

THE mountains at the outskirts of the horizon have a beautiful blue tint, and when our eye rests upon them from afar, we think that they are covered with verdure: the village, seen from a distance, looks well; the white cottages and grey, the roofs of thatch and tile, with the garden plots, and fruit-bearing trees, speak of peace, and the quiet comforts of home: yet, as when we draw nigh to the mountains, we often find them to be barren; and as when we come to the village, the cottages are soiled and stained, in the midst of gardens overgrown with weeds; so everything earthly, however lovely in the distance, when closely looked at, shews marks of sin.

The eye of the mind may rest upon, and the thoughts take pleasure in, foreign scenes; not

beholding the slavery and superstition of the people, nor thinking of their rulers' oppression : but when I remember the stealthy glance of the eye, and the still whisper, with which men speak of tyranny ; then, England, I love thee ; with all thy faults, I love thee. Men may speak of other lands, of hills tipped with gold, and noble rivers with fruitful plains ; but give me the hedge-rows of England, and liberty ; the face of my brethren to look upon, and their loving hearts ; and then, though with but a crust, father-land for me.

“ With all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country ! and while yet a nook is left,
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrain'd to love thee.”

Cowper.

Thy clime is fickle, thy land has thorns, thy sky is darkling, thy days not always bright, thy troubles not a few ; yet when I hear that household word, “ Old England,” it is music to my soul.

We sometimes wish for the days gone by, and that we had lived when deer roamed in our fields, and noble trees, instead of houses, stood thick within our borders. Were those

days, however, with us ; did we wear the clothes of our forefathers, and stand round those ancient barons ; the rude garments would not please us, nor their vassals' food, of coarse brown bread, be pleasant to our taste. We should find that the cotter's life was sadder then than now, that labour in the olden time was more laborious, service then more servile, life not so long, and liberty, sweet liberty, not within the reach of all.

Well it is to draw faithful pictures of the past, put them within modern frames, and hang them up on modern walls ; for in so doing we see, though the painter put forth all his skill, and the poet all his genius, that for us there is no time like the present, that our lines have fallen in pleasant places, and that a goodly heritage is ours. To shew the truth of this, draw the picture of a scene, long since past, in Scotland.

The year, is 1685. The persons, are John Brown, John Graham of Claverhouse, and soldiers. The king, is James the Second.

The king has made the Scottish Parliament pass a law, according to which all who do not

worship God as does the king, shall, when found out, be put to death.

John Brown is known, far and wide, as a man of singular piety. He carries parcels, and is called the Christian carrier of Lanarkshire. Well read in Scripture, blameless in life, no fault can be found in him, beyond this, that he does not worship God in the manner of the king. He is seized on the first of May, while cutting turf, by John Graham of Claverhouse, the king's officer; and, after a hasty examination, is convicted of non-conformity, and sentenced to death. The soldiers, who for a jest play at the torments of hell, and nickname one another, Devil, Beelzebub, and Apollyon, are not easily led to do the butchery. They look upon the wife standing by, with one little child in her hand, and about to give birth to another; and they like not to shed the husband's blood before her face. The prisoner, feeling that eternity is near, that he is about to leave the world, and stand before God, takes his wife tenderly by the hand, and tells her that the hour is come of which he spoke when he asked her to become his bride. "In this cause," says she,

"I am willing to give you up." Now, behold, he kneels and prays; prays fervently, as one about to die; prays for himself, his dear ones, and the persecuted people. Claverhouse, maddened with rage at the man's courage and piety, and that the soldiers are so much moved, draws forth a pistol, and shoots him dead. The wife, a timid gentle woman, neither sickens nor faints; and pressing her murdered husband's head against her bosom, looks upon the murderer, and says: "Well, sir, well: the day of reckoning will come." He replies with fiendish smile, "to man I can answer; and as for God, I will take Him into my own hand." Then mounting his horse, the soldiers march; but she, placing on the ground her fatherless child, ties up her husband's head, straightens his limbs, covers him with her plaid, and then sits down to weep!

It is our happiness that we have liberty of conscience, that our fields do not witness murder, that our prisons are not full of those who suffer for conscience sake, and that in comely houses, no man making us afraid, we may worship God according to the Scripture. Of John Brown we may say:

“ And he too at length has past
From the sorrow and the fears,
From the anguish and the tears,
From the desolate distress,
Of this world's great loneliness,
From its withering and its blight,
From the shadow of its night,
Into God's pure sunshine bright.”

Genoveva.

Not only did the Puritans suffer in those days, but the Clergy also ; not only the poor of our land, but the bishops of our Church witnessed with a good confession. James the Second, when he came to the crown, swore by the true faith of a Christian that he would maintain the Protestant form of worship in this land, and keep the Church of England safe and free in the enjoyment of all her privileges. How he acted in Scotland, the sad history of John Brown tells us ; what he did in England, now consider.

He appointed Roman Catholics to benefices in the Church of England, suspended bishops, gave himself up to the control of a Jesuit priest, oppressed the Universities, turned Colleges into Papal Schools, and, in order to make Popery triumphant, did all in his power to

destroy the constitution and liberties of the land. It is well known that his evil designs failed, and that the dark night of his reign was followed by the bright day of free and enlightened rule under William and Mary.

The bishops and clergy are ordered to read, or cause to be read, in London, on the twentieth and twenty-seventh of May, 1688 ; and in other parts of England, on the third and tenth of June ; a Declaration of Indulgence, so called, which is unconstitutional and illegal. In the Declaration there is a pretended offer of liberty of conscience ; and the penalties and liabilities against all non-conforming bodies are repealed, in order to prepare the way for Romanism. The Dissenters, themselves, see this ; and urge the bishops and clergy to refuse compliance. The clergy have been the king's most faithful servants, and the nobility have hazarded their lives ; but their affection has been turned into aversion, and their loyalty into discontent, by the appointment of Romish privy councillors, the raising of mass houses, and the ostentatious walking about in the public streets of foreign priests. The king strikes at the liberty—at the religion

of his people, again and again, until the spirit of the people is aroused ; they rise enfuriate, and he who has so wantonly sown to the wind, reaps the whirlwind.

Petre, the king's Romish confessor, declares that he will make the English clergy eat dirt, the vilest and most loathsome of all dirt. It is hard to know how the clergy will act with the command of the king. There is no time to call them together, and take counsel ; nor can all the bishops assemble. Baxter, Bates, Howe, and other men, great and good, urge the clergy to stand up manfully, and fight against Popery for the faith once delivered unto the Saints. It is determined at last by those few, bishops and others, who have been able to meet for counsel, that the Indulgence ought not to be read ; and it is not read : for only four men, out of the hundred parishes in London, can be found so to act against their conscience. The clergy will not eat the dirt, the loathsome dirt, which the Jesuit sets before them.

Archbishop Sancroft, and six bishops, Lloyd, Turner, Luke, Ken, White, and Trelawney, draw up and sign a petition to the king, set-

ting forth that the Declaration is illegal, and that they cannot in sound judgment, honour, or conscience, be parties to publishing in the house of God, and during divine service, what is contrary to law. They go to Whitehall, beg to see the king, and are admitted. James receives them graciously, hoping that they will submit. After reading the paper, he accuses them of rank rebellion. "We are ready, sir, to die for you," they reply. Trelawney, falling on his knees, says; "Sir, no Trelawney can be a rebel. Remember how my family has fought for the crown." Thus they entreat, but in vain.

That night, it is not known how, the petition of the bishops is published through London, and they are hailed as defenders of the national faith. The Church becomes dear to the people; Baxter praises the noble men who are ready to suffer for the truth; having been in bonds, he feels for those about to be bound; and, to the honour of Dissenters be it said, that in this time of trial they join hands in faith and truth with the Church; and side by side do battle for the faith.

The king enraged, commits the seven pre-

lates to the Tower, to be prosecuted for libel. As they go to prison, thousands of the people fall on their knees, and pray aloud for them. Many dash into the water to receive a blessing from the holy men. Again and again from the boats arises the cry, "God bless your lordships." The sentinels at the Tower ask for a blessing from those whom they look upon as martyrs, and the brave soldiers drink the health of the bishops.

They are bailed from the Tower on the fifteenth of June, and that day fortnight, the twenty-ninth of June, is fixed for their trial. A memorable day. The whole nation is excited, distant lands are moved, and anxiously observe the four judges. On the side of the bishops is well-nigh all the forensic learning of the age; they are opposed by men of meaner powers, but matchless impudence.

The writing of the bishops cannot be proved. The crown lawyers then take another line of prosecution. It is proved that the, so-called, libel, was published in Middlesex; and it is called false, malicious, and seditious. In reply to this, the counsel for the bishops prove, that the dispensing power assumed by the king is

illegal, and that no more has been set forth in the petition than what Parliament has repeatedly declared. Somers, the junior counsel, rises last. He shews that the petition is not false; for every fact stated in it is proved to be true. It is not malicious; for the petitioners sought not to stir up strife, but have been so placed by the government that they must oppose the royal will or violate their conscience. It is not seditious; for it has not been scattered by the writers among the rabble, but put by them into the king's own hand. It is not a libel; for it only states what every aggrieved subject may properly present to his sovereign. The chief judge sums up the evidence, decides that it is a libel, and the next is of the same opinion; the third and fourth say, "it is no libel."

The jury are locked up, and allowed neither food nor candle. About four o'clock in the morning some bowls of water are taken for them to wash in; but they are all so thirsty that they drink it. Arnold, the king's brewer, says, "the bishops are guilty;" the others maintain, "the bishops are not guilty;" and at six in the morning Arnold gives way. At

ten the Court meets again. The crowd is great, and the noblest peers and commoners of England come eagerly to know the verdict. Sir Roger Langley cries, "Not Guilty." There is a shout, the thousands outside take it up; guns are fired along the river; the bells of all the Churches ring out a peal; houses, streets, and squares are filled with acclamations; and, the most touching thing of all, honest English nature cannot contain all the joy, down many a rugged manly face trickle tears of joy and thankfulness, that the innocent have been delivered from the tyrant's power. Horsemen, meanwhile, ride off fast, bearing to distant towns tidings of the mighty victory won by Church and Nation; telling all that England still is free!

May this, and other past deliverances of our nation, drive off every drear and dark foreboding. Our isle is not a weed cast upon the ocean's bosom. Our destiny is not flung this way and that, at last to perish on the bleak shore of infidelity, or to wander as a spectre amid the dark shades of papal superstition. As the life boat on the wave is ever rising; as the lotus, swayed by wind and tide, is rooted

down below ; England, if faithful, will ride through every storm ; and, fast anchored in the deep eternal love of God, become the glory of all nations.

“ Go, call thy sons ; instruct them what a debt
They owe their ancestors, and make them swear
To pay it, by transmitting down entire
Those sacred rights to which themselves were born.”
Akenside.

“ AN educated man ought to know three things : First, where he is ; that is to say, what sort of a world he is come into, how large it is, what creatures live in it, what it is made of, and what may be made of it. Secondly, where he is going ; that is to say, what information there is of any other world besides this ; what seems to be the nature of that. Thirdly, what he had best do under these circumstances ; that is to say, what kind of faculties he possesses, what are the present state and wants of mankind, what is his place in society, and what are the readiest means in his power of attaining happiness and diffusing it. The man who knows these things, and who has had his will so subdued in the learning of them, that he is ready to do what he knows he ought, is an educated man. The man who knows them not, is uneducated, though he talk all the tongues of Babel !”—*Ruskin.*

CHAPTER XVI.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

The New City—Demagogues—Our Forefathers—Labour—
Working Men are Benefactors—The Golden Age—True
Greatness—The Glorious End.

“ AT the flaming forge of life
Our fortune must be wrought ;
On its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.”

Longfellow.

WHEN our imagination leads us to the future, no object is more worthy of thought than that City, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, the New Jerusalem : where angelic hosts throng the streets, and surround the Throne : where the nations of those that are saved walk in light, and all the holy are as kings in glory and honour : where a high wall of safety, twelve gates of praise, and foundations, are garnished with precious stones of heavenly truth : where is the tree of life yielding twelve manner of fruits every month : where a pure river, clear as crystal, flows out

from the throne : where a voice comes forth, saying ; “ Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great : ” and where is heard the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying : “ Alleluia ! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ! ”

The gates of that City are not yet opened for us to enter ; our dwelling, meanwhile, is fixed upon the earth ; and often the times are hard. Do not let us make our lot worse by untimely or useless complaints ; but remember, that by our trials in earthly abodes and hard times, we are to be fitted, under the guidance of God’s Spirit, for heavenly abodes and glorious times. Let us not listen to those who go about to cry down the rich, the great, and the noble : who tell the poor man of all his poverty and trouble, not that he may be the better, wiser, and abler to overcome them ; but more discontented, and unthankful. “ The worst men in every age are almost sure to be demagogues.” Hear what Jack Cade says : “ There shall be, in England, seven halfpenny loaves sold for a penny ; the three hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to

drink small beer ; all the realm shall be in common, when I am king." It was a shrewd reply that the Irishman is said to have given to Daniel O'Connell, who asserted that the poor were slaves, and oppressed by tyrants : "Sir, we are mighty thankful to you for telling us: for, sure, we should not have known it had not your honour told us."

It is well, when we are discontented, to compare our lot with that of our forefathers.

Lord Macaulay, in his History of England, states that, in the times of Charles the Second, four shillings a week were considered good wages for the farm-labourer ; and that from September to March, three shillings and sixpence were thought to be enough. In the most favoured countries, such as Devon, five shillings were given ; and in the neighbourhood of Bury St. Edmund's, five shillings in the winter, and six in the summer. In 1661, the wages in Essex were fixed at six shillings in the winter, and seven in the summer ; but at that time food was at almost famine price. In 1685, the pay of a private soldier was four shillings and eightpence the week, and there was no difficulty in filling the ranks. At the present

time, a soldier has seven shillings and seven-pence ; and husbandmen twelve, fourteen, and sixteen shillings the week.

Mechanics in 1680, had a shilling a day, and a member of Parliament complained, that these high wages made it impossible for us to compete with the Indian looms. The poor man thought that he ought to have a shilling a day, but was frequently forced to work for less, and often had only sixpence. He had then no newspaper to plead his cause, and could only put forth his complaint in ballads, in which the rich masters were bitterly complained of. Many old catches were in this spirit :

When Adam delved, and Eva span,
Pray, who was then the gentleman ?

Children of six years old were put to work in the factories, and it was not deemed too early. At Norwich alone these little ones made a profit to their masters of twelve thousand pounds a year.

A few more facts.

It is certain that labour did not then receive more than half the amount of the present price paid for it. Food, on the contrary, was not so

cheap in proportion. Bread, such as is now so plentifully given to paupers, was seldom seen on a shopkeeper's table. Most of the people lived on rye, barley, and oats. In those days there was a greater proportion of pauperism than at present; mechanics and rusties had to dress in a peculiar garb, and even the shape of their shroud was fixed by law. Then the average duration of life in London was twenty-three years, now it is forty years. Erasmus (Epistle 432) stated that the slovenly habits of the people rendered the plague frequent: that the clay floors were covered with rushes, under which lay grease and spilled beer, bones and spittle, the filth of dogs and cats, with every thing that is nasty. Then masters beat their servants cruelly; children at school were punished as if hard blows improved the mind; husbands, of a respectable character, did not think that it was unseemly to beat their wives; and the prisons were dens full of the vilest filth, and schools of iniquity. In the time of Elizabeth there were very few chimneys, the fire was kindled against the wall, and the smoke got out as it could: the bed was a straw pallet, the pillow a log, and he that had a

sack of chaff was well off; a soft pillow was only fit, they thought, for a sickly woman.

These things shew that we must not place the golden age of England in past times, when noblemen were not so well served as footmen are now; when a clean shirt once a week was a luxury, and only for the gentry. What time are we to fix upon as the golden age of England? Certainly not the present; but, avoiding discontent, and being thankful for the many and great advantages we enjoy, let us sow, in the present time, good seed that will yield, in the future, a golden harvest.

The price paid for labour ought to be that which is sufficient to maintain the labourer and his family. Every man should strive, in the use of all proper means, to improve his condition; to gather around him not only the necessaries, but also the comforts, of life; and to raise himself in the estimation of his fellows. He ought to desire to have good food and clothing, a cleanly and comfortable house, and a proper education for his children. This will lead him to act with prudence and forethought, so that, while seeking to find a

bride in his early manhood,* he will be unwilling by a hasty or an untimely marriage, to deprive himself and children of those advantages. If the standard of living were universally raised; even then, did every working man resolve to render himself able to supply his rational wants; by temperance, diligence, and skill, he would command the needful wages. That is a prosperous country in which the natural price of labour is at the highest rate. In many parts of the East, and at some places in Ireland, the wages are scarcely sufficient to supply the commonest food, rags for clothing, and a pig-sty for a dwelling.

A skilled artisan, and an intelligent diligent labourer, are benefactors to their country: they promote its wealth, increase its dignity, and strengthen its power. A nation is rich or poor according to the measure of the quantity with which working men can supply themselves and families with the necessities and comforts of life. Wealth most rapidly increases where they are well paid, and their industry liberally encouraged.

* This will be found a better remedy for the Great Social Evil than many are ready to think.

Those branches of labour which are not lucrative, should be given up for others that are more profitable ; and, while every man should make it a point of honour to support his wife by his own labour, all those trades which a woman's intelligence and strength can successfully control, should be left to the female sex : especially when, as is the case in most populous countries, there are many widows and unmarried women, who are under the necessity of labouring for their subsistence.

Division of labour saves time, by adding to the rapidity of production ; it increases wealth, and, in a sense, lengthens life. It was by the division of labour we were enabled to cover our land with railways, which have added so mightily to our national energies. In their infancy, in the year 1842, it was calculated that about eighteen millions of persons travelled by them. If every one of these saved only an hour by the rapidity of motion, there would be a saving of the labour of two thousand men for one year, or the labour of one man for two thousand years ; and, yet, these engines are not wandering fires which burn up the bread of the people by destroying the demand for their

labour ; but as lights, which run to and fro, shewing ways to less toilsome and more gainful occupation ; and, by their rapid motion, hastening the approach of England's golden age.

England's golden age is neither past nor present, it is future ; but every man may help to bring it near. Let him who works in art or science, labour that comfort and plenty may be brought within the reach of all. If the labourer will seek to be happy in his labour, and if all classes will bind themselves together in mutual good offices of brotherly affection ; then the poor man, having a good hope of the future, and being rich in faith, shall not envy the splendour of the wealthy. Let every man strive to draw, within his own life's circle, a living picture of the nation as it will be when God's Word is obeyed, and peace and plenty rule ; and then let him live in faith and hope : knowing that he, at least, is helping to bring the good time near. Let the industrious poor form, within the chambers of their own dwellings, a picture of that man's house, who, not led away by the love of drink, nor made discontented by the clamours of those who live by other men's folly, rules his house, and guides his children

by Christian precept. Clustering roses may not surround his door, but many will be found within ; while his wife, as a fruitful vine, and his children as the olive branches, add grace and beauty. Such a picture will delight an angel. Let all men draw, put forth their utmost skill, and so adorn their inner mental chambers, that there may be many spiritual images of delight. Observe the good man's heart, the pious man's soul. There, like the rich hangings of the tabernacle embroidered with emblems of redemption, is the peace of God which passeth all understanding. There, love to God and man is fire and light from heaven ; while the beauty of humility, and the sweet savour of modesty, are as the pure white priestly robe, and the fragrant incense, of the temple. There the Holy Spirit dwells in much wisdom. There is seen the likeness of Christ, as He spoke and as He healed, as He wept in the garden and as He lay on the cross, as He rose from the grave and as He ascended to heaven. There, placed by the Great King's hand, are many goodly ornaments from heaven : the golden pot, with manna for spiritual food ; Moses' rod, that puts forth buds in token of

acceptance ; and the law, written in letters of holy love. Such a picture is lovely. Let all men try to draw it in their own souls ; and, when they find that it is too much of a masterpiece for them to perform unaided, they can, with fervent prayer, ask Jesus to draw the graceful lines, the Holy Spirit to give the colours of beauty, God the Father to perfect the whole. This is heaven's work for heaven's King ; and when all earthly things, and pictures, and historic scenes, are by-gone, it shall be hung above, in God's glorious chambers, and shewn to the angelic host, who will joyfully praise the work of grace.

Is all this possible ? Will the world ever see a time when all the poor will be happy, and all the rich good ? It is possible. (2 Peter iii. 13.)

“ Then all delights will blossom forth,
That here in bud expire ;
And from all mourning weeds of earth
Be wove a bright attire.”

It is also possible for every man to arrive at true greatness. Greatness has been but the lot of a few, it may, nevertheless, be attained by all. True greatness, true happiness, true wisdom, are three branches of the tree of life,

which stretch down to us from the Paradise of God. Reflect upon this. All God's works are perfect, and every thing is most wisely adapted to the object for which it was created. Whether we think of the animal or the vegetable kingdom, of organic or inorganic matter, every thing is perfect in its kind, and accomplishes that object for which it was called into being. Man likewise has received powers varying in kind and degree, yet every one perfect in itself, and able, if rightly used, to render the possessor perfect also. Not perfect in a metaphysical sense, but perfect by attaining to the highest state which the faculties given will permit. Noah, Job, Zechariah, and Elizabeth, are spoken of as perfect, not in the sense of being without sin, but as having done that which the faculties God had given them were capable of. This kind of perfection all may seek, and all attain. (Matt. v. 48.) It is united with the deepest humility, the strongest faith, the brightest hope, and the most diligent labour. As the stars are accurate in their course, and revolve their appointed orbits ; so may man, by the power of God from on high, regulate his life, use his

talents, put forth his energies, and occupy his time, in such way as shall be pleasing to his Great Master. He cannot justify himself by his own righteousness, he cannot in any way be regarded as having merit in the sight of God—at the best he is but an unprofitable servant—but he may so live as that God shall say to him at the last, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” (Matt. xxv. 23.)

The Most High will be pleased when He looks down from heaven to earth, and sees within our hearts the lovely features of His dear Son drawn there by the Holy Ghost; and in our lives the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Is not this true greatness?

Now look to the prophetic future.

View.—A great river, rising in the mountains, flowing through the plains, and bearing vessels to the ocean, where ships of all nations meet. Time is like such a river. Its source was in the beginning, when God created the heaven and the earth. It was a pure stream of Paradise, and has flowed on ever since through all generations. It received Adam’s sin, and Abel’s blood; it destroyed all the

wicked at the Deluge, and scattered the rebellious at Babel. On the banks are mighty empires, small villages which become great cities, thousands of children and armies of men. Those empires fall, the cities decay, men and children die; the torrent carries all away, and rolls them through sepulchral chasms into everlasting depths. Now see on the future eternal shore, an assemblage more numerous than human eye ever before looked upon. All nations, all languages, of olden and modern times; the king from his throne, the captive from his cell, the oppressed and the oppressor; wait for judgment. There is a sign, there is a throne, there is One upon it before whose face the heaven and the earth flee away. There is an opening, as of the great and deep pit, there is the unsealing of eternal darkness, there is the wail of unspeakable anguish, as the ungodly, driven by the terrors of Divine wrath, and stung by remorse, rush from the glorious presence of God into the valley of the shadow of eternal death.

“Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end

Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever burning sulphur unconsum'd."

Milton.

After this there spreads out before the eye a landscape of more than earthly beauty. A melodious sound gently swells till infinite space is filled. The air gives to the foot of man a firm resting place. Old age is turned into youth, deformity into beauty, and death into life. There is no more sorrow or crying, scorching heat or piercing cold, the atmosphere of heaven is around, and men are like the angels. Have you seen a sweet child kneel at his father's feet, or recline upon his mother's breast? Did not the father lay his hand fondly on the boy, and the mother kiss her babe? O! we shall see our Father, God, and Saviour, when we kneel before His throne, come forth and lay His hand on us; and, with a love more holy and tender than a mother's, put round us His Almighty Arms. Then we shall look upon Him face to face, every fear will be stilled, and every sorrow flee away for ever.

Let the mind delight itself with such imaged foresights and tastes of glory. A pale light but beautiful, like that of the rising moon,

fringing the clouds with radiance; then breaking forth, bright and glorious, like that of the summer's sun. Battlements and towers not for war, but princely mansions. The sound of voices, deep, yet low and sweet. Building on building, not confused, of more than mortal architecture; columns, figures, fountains sparkling in the light of heaven, springs of purest crystal, lofty walls, and pearly gates, delightfully intermingled. Light and shade, graceful trees, flowers brilliant with every hue, rivers and mountains. Thousands of millions shout, a sound is heard, majestic yet subduing, melting and transporting; "Glory to God in the Highest." A rapturous hymn rises upon the ear, the stars listen, and every world is still. It is the new song, the like of which was never heard on earth, the song of the Redeemed. There is a voice from the firmament, and the cherubims let down their wings; the colour of amber and sapphire, and the appearance of fire, with the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, surround the throne of God, and all things are filled with His Glory! There is a countless host all in white, alike, yet different; with palms in their hands, and crowns on

their heads ; every man is mighty, and every woman fair, a company of kings and queens ; and God is all in all.

“ Oh ! I am rapt aloft. My spirit soars
Beyond the skies, and leaves the stars behind.
Lo ! angels lead me to the happy shores,
And floating pœans fill the buoyant wind.
Farewell ! base earth, farewell ! my soul is freed.
Far from its clayey cell it springs.”

Henry Kirke White.

“ It remains only that I now lift up to heaven my eyes and my hands from the table of my pursuits, and humbly and devoutly pray to the Father of Lights. O Thou who dost quicken in us a desire for the light of grace, that Thou mayest translate us into the light of glory ; Thou, O Lord and Creator, who hast redeemed the work of Thy hands ; I give Thee thanks. Behold, I have completed a work of my calling with that measure of intellectual strength which Thou hast given me. I have declared Thy praise, and shewn Thy works, to as many as will read thereof ; so far as my finite spirit can comprehend Thy infinity. If anything unworthy of Thee has been taught by me, a worm born and nurtured in sin, mercifully forgive me ; and do Thou graciously teach me, that I may correct it. Finally, grant me this favour : that this work may do hurt to none, but good to many, and make known Thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”—*Taken out of a Prayer by Kepler.*

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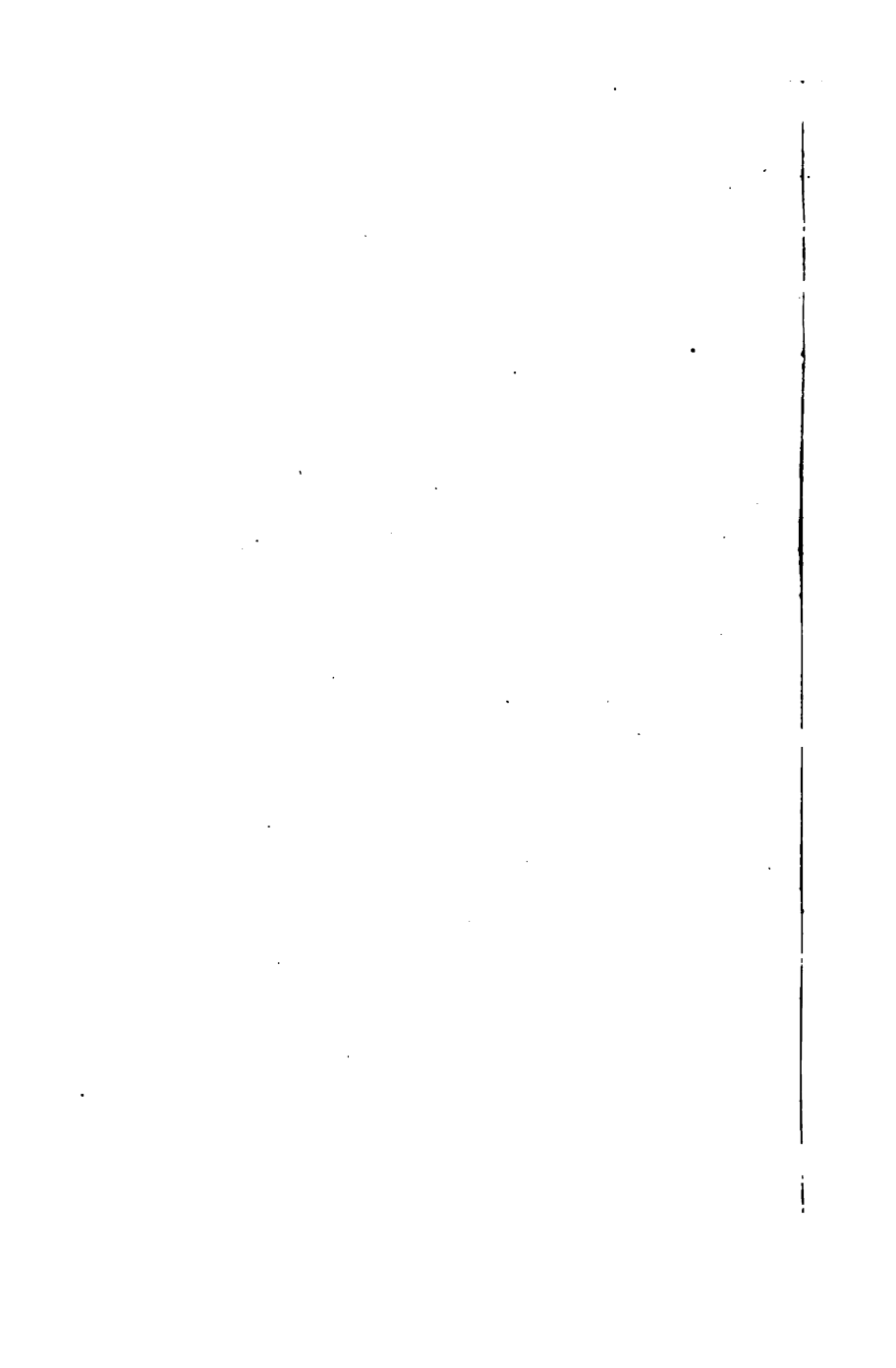
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